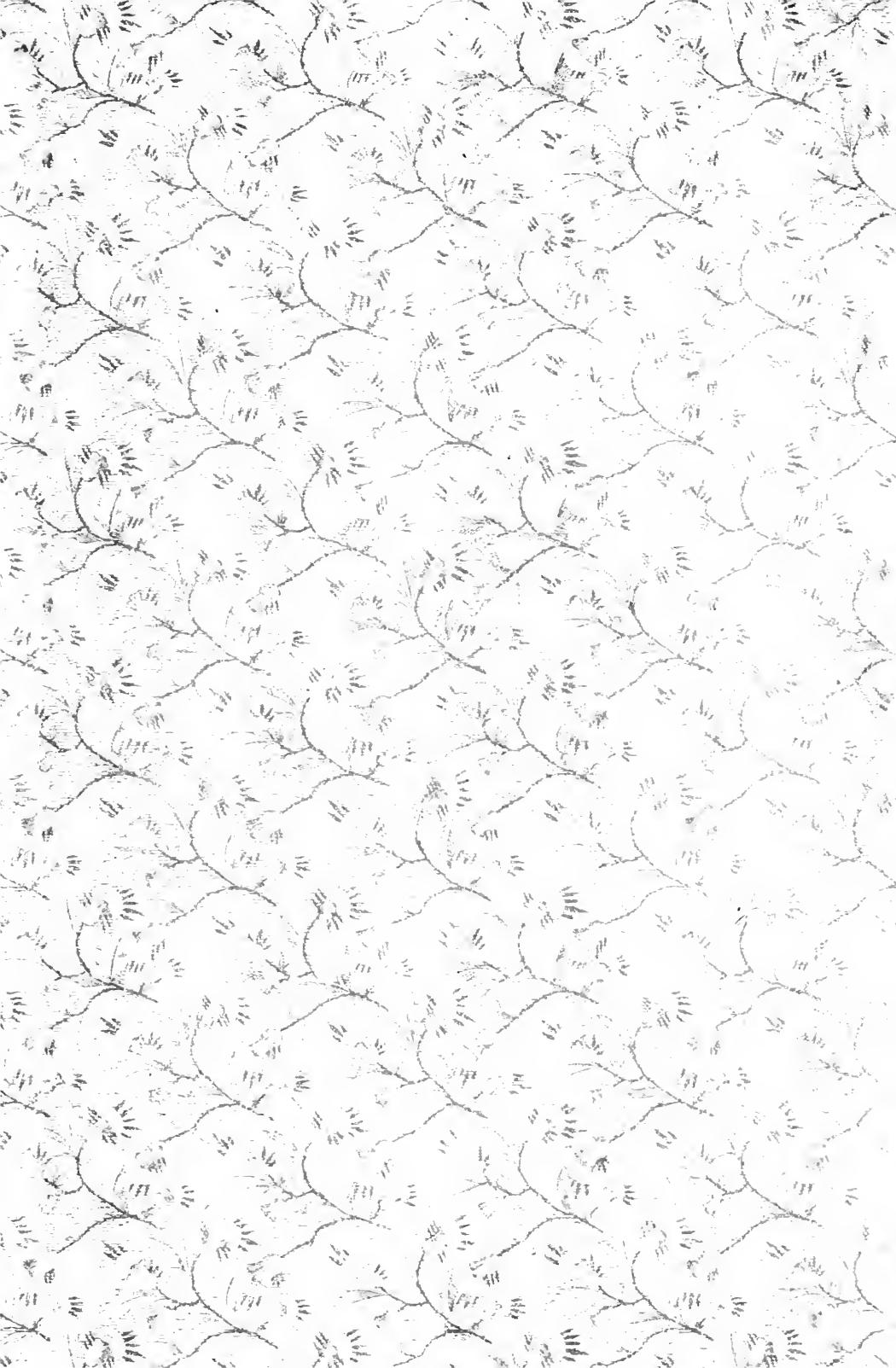


1897  


Song of the Ages.

By M. C. O'BURNE.

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"He comes not back: O breaking heart be still!  
While time endures woman shall endure."

*Book II, p. 57*

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# SONG OF THE AGES,

A THEODICY,

**BOOKS I AND II,**

And Other Poems.

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BY M. C. O'BYRNE,

Of the Bar of Illinois.

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So praye I to God that none miswrite thee,  
Ne thee mysmetre for defaut of tonge.

(Chaucer.)

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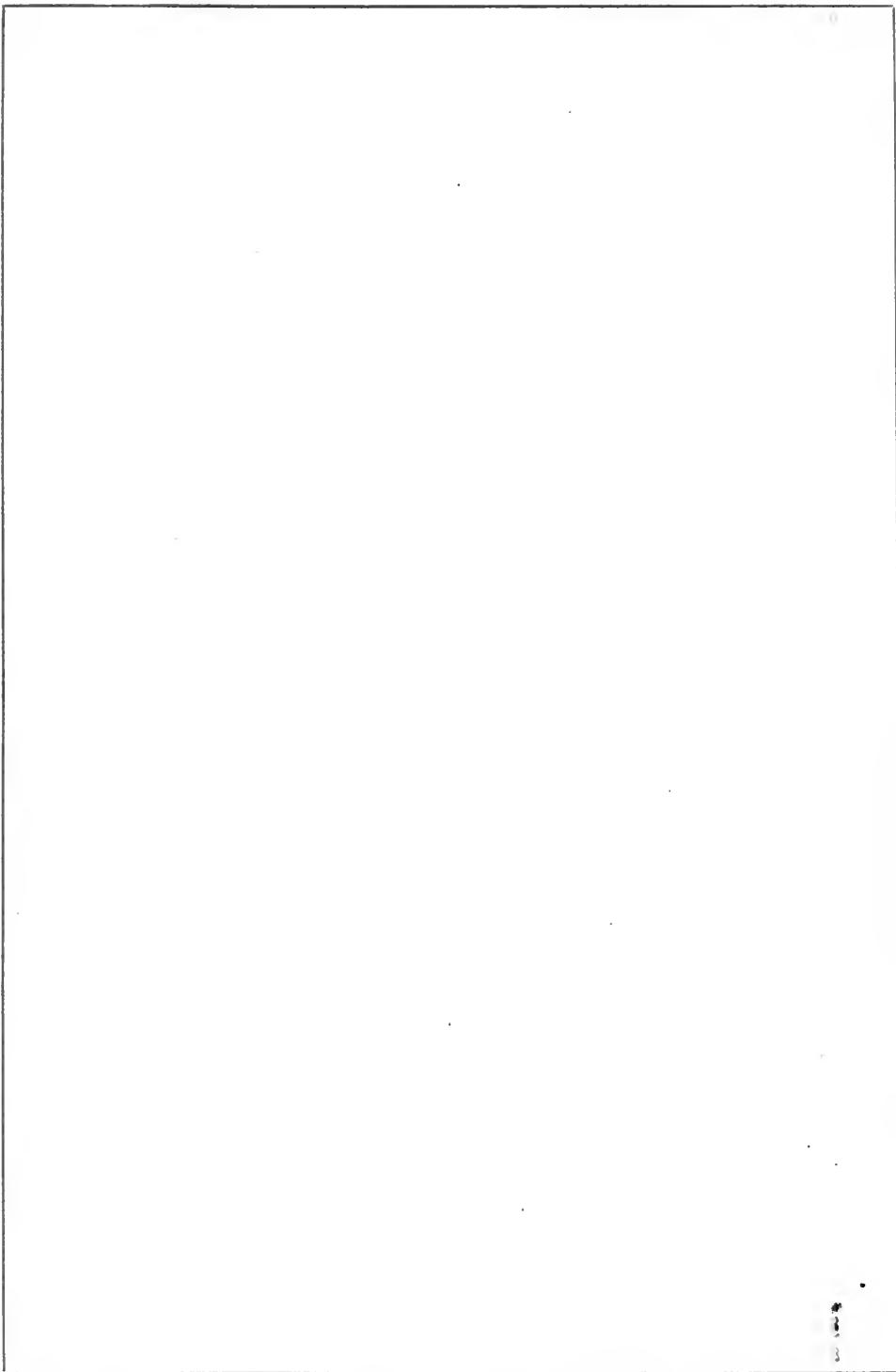
LA SALLE, ILL.,  
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By M. C. O'BYRNE,  
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THIS POEM,  
WHEREIN THE PROGRESS OF MAN IS IDENTIFIED  
WITH THE PURPOSE OF GOD,  
IS, BY PERMISSION,  
DEDICATED  
TO THE RIGHT-HONORABLE W. E. GLADSTONE,  
SCHOLAR, PATRIOT, AND STATESMAN,  
BY AND THROUGH  
WHOSE LIFELONG DEVOTION TO HUMANITY,  
THE DAWN OF THE  
NEW ERA OF BROTHERHOOD AND JUSTICE  
HAS BEEN SO GLORIOUSLY ACCELERATED.



## PREFACE.

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An eminent critic, Mr. Theodore Watts, has said that "what is demanded of the epic of art....is unity of impression, harmonious and symmetrical development of a conscious heart-thought, or motive."\* Possessing this, and being conscious of it, the presumption is, therefore, that an epic poet is urged to "make" in some such manner as John Wesley's lay preachers were impelled to exhort. If an excuse or apology be desirable for such a work as is here offered to the reader, I can sincerely urge that at its inception I felt,—whether or not deluded time will tell,—assured of both a motive and an impulse. My scheme was, briefly, to

Vindicate the ways of God to Man

by tracing the latter from the first rude cradle, revealed to our wondering eyes by Science, upward to that glorious consummation of the ages which it is so sad to be asked to contemplate as in turn certain to sink in endless night. That the impulse was not lacking is, I think, proved by another of Mr. Watts' measures, for I can honestly avow that during the progress of this work I felt as a child, "with ears attuned to nothing but the whispers of those spirits from the Golden Age who, according to Hesiod, haunt and bless the degenerate earth."

Painfully conscious, however, that in poetry, as in the religious life, there are false and misleading spirits, I launch my little barque upon an ocean where its qualities will be surely and swiftly tested, yet not without hope that this, our first adventure, may encourage us once more to put to sea.

The original design of a "Song of the Ages" comprehended a poem of at least four books. In deference, however, to a sentiment

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\*Encyclopaedia Britannica, article "Poetry."

which seems to be almost universal,—namely, that the people of this generation have no time for epic poetry,—this intention remains, at least for the present, unfulfilled. The time, place, and manner of publication have been dictated by the logic of circumstances,—the *saeva paupertas* which has spared the world incalculable volumes of mediocrity. Two years ago arrangements had been made for issuing the work in London, the literary centre of the English-speaking world, but almost at the last moment it was withdrawn, the reason being that the author was required to sign a contract that seemed to him both illiberal and unjust. Having crossed the ocean twice, the book finds its birth in the place of its conception, where possibly it is fated to be buried. In one sense, however, the song and the singer are singularly favored: they are both free from the taint of that commercialism which, when it finds a place in literature as a controlling principle, is like the wide breaking in of the waters of desolation.

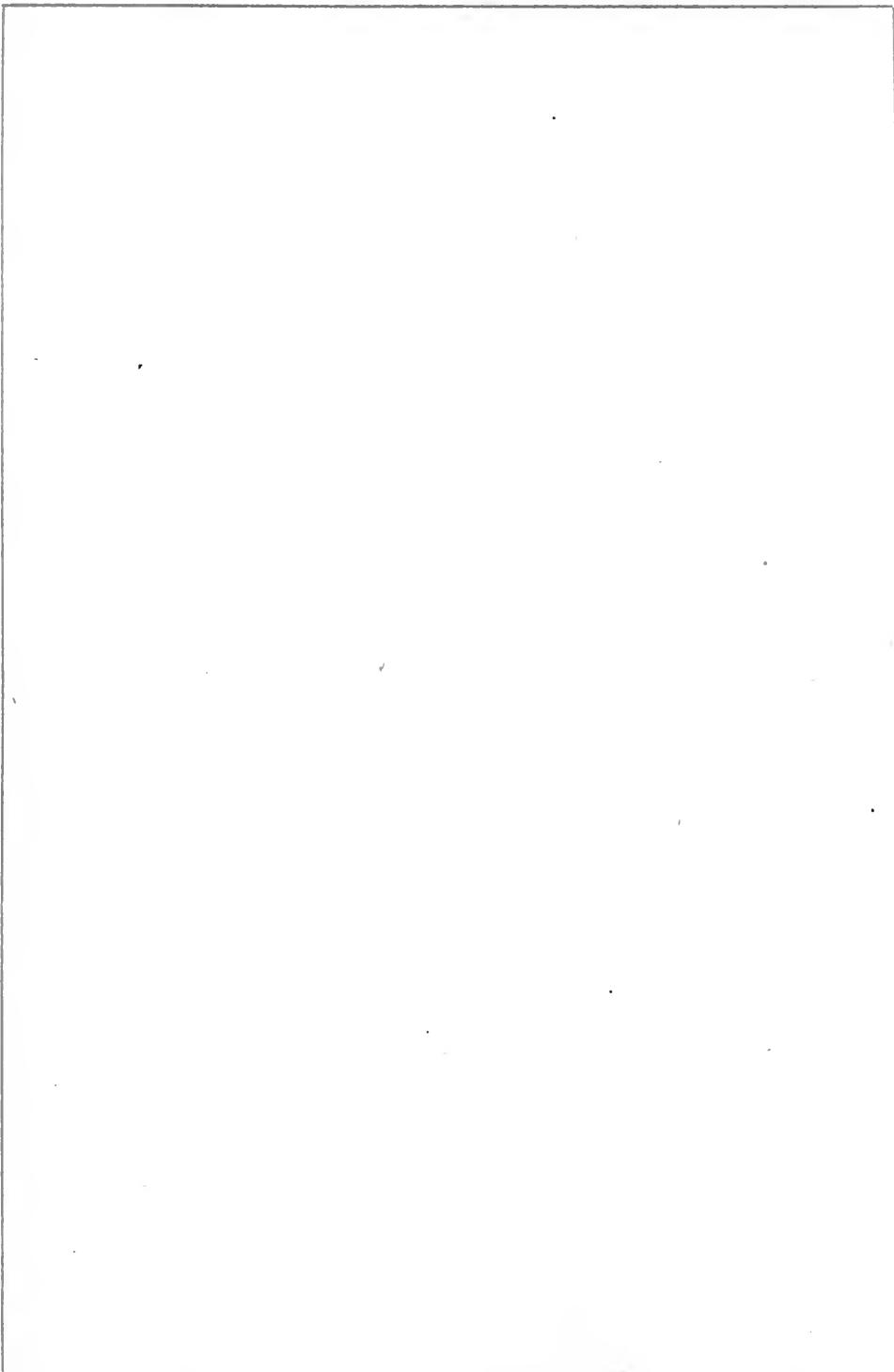
Now, Little Book, go forth in peace!

M. C. O'BYRNE.

La Salle, Illinois.

March 10, 1897.

**SONG OF THE AGES.**



# PRELUDE.

## I.

### *De Profundis.*

DE PROFUNDIS CLAMAVI! from the depths of my soul I cried,  
Asking light from the darkness, where I wandered without a guide;  
For the stars that twinkled above me they recked not of me or my prayer,  
And the weight of a life that was wasted had burthened my heart with  
despair:

Asking light from the darkness, for the stars that shine in the sky,  
Though questioned through countless ages, have never vouchsafed reply:  
Listening in vain 'mid the silence for a voice that should pierce the gloom,  
Watching in vain for the angel to roll the sealed stone from the tomb,  
Where, wrapped in folded cerecloths, the weft that my hands had made,  
My early hopes were buried, where my own dead Past was laid.  
From the depths of my soul I pleaded till my mood was changed to scorn  
Of the senseless god\* that cannot resolve us why man is born,  
Of brooding Brahm amorphous in whose thought the world began,  
The god whose sole interpreter is Echo, the wife of Pan.  
And weary and worn with thinking, I said I will live as one  
Who recks not of the evil to follow the morning's sun;  
I will drink of the cup of pleasure, I will hie me to Beauty's arms,  
And renew my youth in dalliance at the wellspring of her charms,  
My golden youth, my potent youth, when Function and Desire  
Went hand in hand unto the shrine where glowed the Paphian fire.

---

\*Apparently oblivious of the purpose of this poem, a "clever" publisher's reader objected that this and the succeeding lines were atheistic. It was scarcely worth while to controvert so learned a Theban.

## II.

*Dixit Inskipiens.*

COME, let us live, my Lesbia! come, Lesbia, let us love!<sup>(1)</sup>  
The day is brief, the night is long, the things which are above  
Our human ken concern us not, they only are the wise  
Who know the good the hour affords and grasp it ere it flies.  
Let Pentheus climb his tree to break th' impenetrable bars,  
And spoil his sight to contemplate the sameness of the stars,  
Their everlasting sameness, in that scroll we may not read  
One word of thought or purpose on which man may hang a creed;  
Naught but the tale mechanical, the everlasting round,  
Vicissitude of energy, of space without a bound,  
Or coast or shore or islets green wherein the soul may rest  
As in the bosom of its God, the Islands of the Blest.  
Come, Lesbia, turn thine eyes on me, with me defy the blind  
Chance universe revealed to sense but not revealed to mind.  
Come, let us drink our fill of love and make each present hour  
Give forth its sweets as to the bee the nectar from the flower.  
Twin soul of mine! though none may know what lies beyond the stream  
Of time, or whether aught we see be other than a dream,  
Our love is real; holding thee, I care not if the world,  
The cinder heap of caecic Chance, be into chaos hurled.

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(1) *Vivamus mea Lesbia, atq' amemus.*

## III.

*Exurgat Deus!*

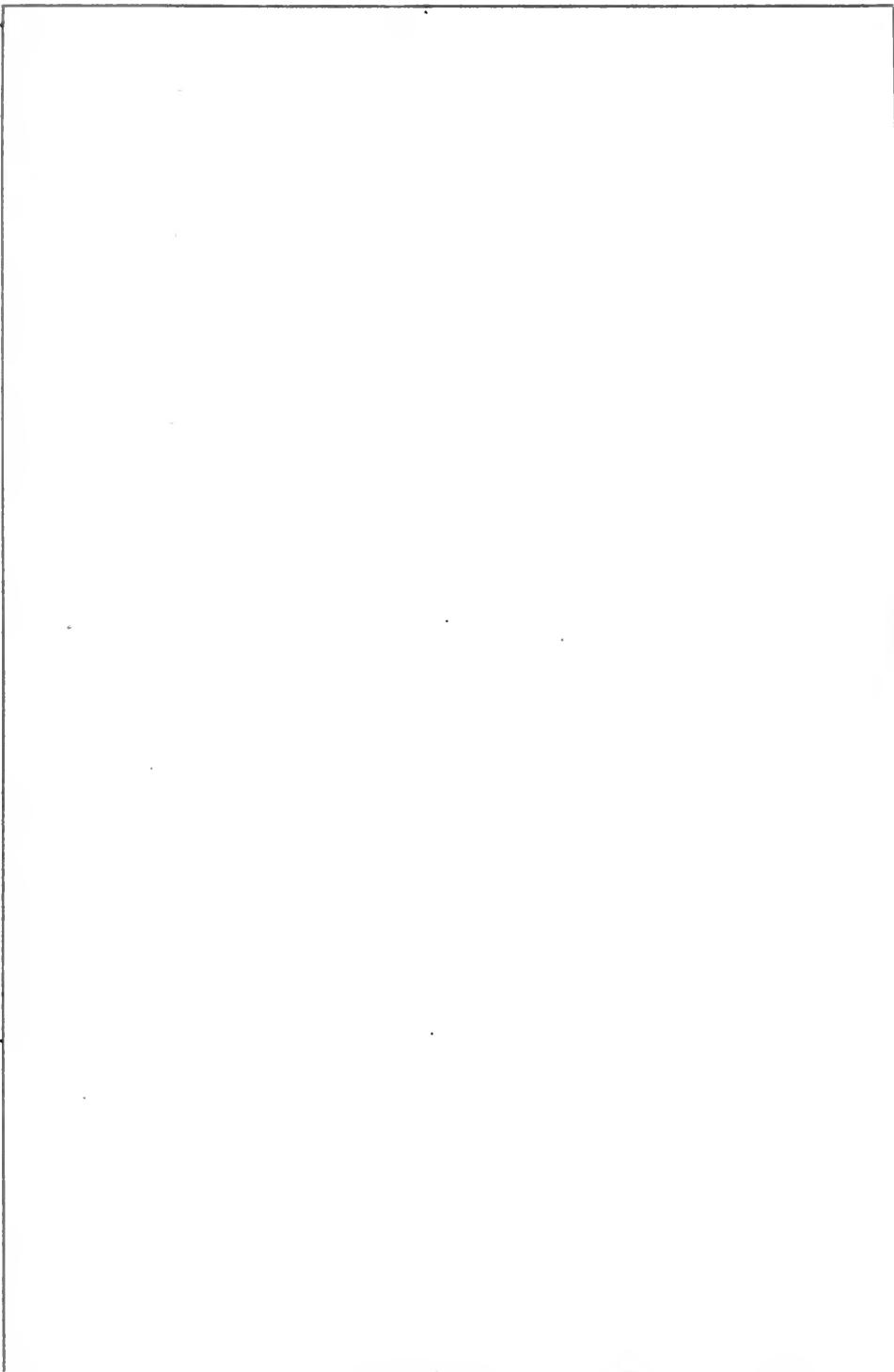
As lay Titanogene<sup>(2)</sup> the while its beak the vulture dyed  
In blood and gall, so lay I when my Lesbia left my side.  
O Sun, didst thou forbear to shine when I, in my despair,  
Blasphemed thy light because the Lord of Life denied my prayer,  
And claimed His own? O crusted Earth, say, was thy granite shell  
Convulsed when from my frenzied soul I cursed all Nature? Tell,  
Oh tell me all ye lucent orbs that sail aethereal seas  
What shocks disturb their limpid calm when impious thoughts like these  
Rush forth into infinity, to roll for evermore,  
The billows of man's impotence, through seas without a shore?  
There bound, but mutinous, I lay, and there, O Power Divine!  
Thy love discovered me, there poured the healing oil and wine:  
The veil was rent, the cumulus of doubt was thrown aside,  
And with unclouded eye I saw my Maker justified.

\* \* \* \* \*

O Lord of Life, O Quickener! inspire my feeble lips  
To tell the vision that I saw in that apocalypse!  
Resolve the chaos of my mind as Thou of old didst spread  
Thy wings o'er earth's proplasmic mist to vivify the dead!  
Tune thou the poet's harp and teach his hand to strike the keys,  
To show how the Arch-Poet makes celestial symphonies!

---

<sup>(2)</sup>Prometheus, son of the Titan Iapetus and the nymph Clymene.



# SONG OF THE AGES.

## BOOK THE FIRST.

### THE STONE AGE.

#### I.

Descend, ye stateliest of the dulcet choir  
Whose haunt is by the sacred springs! descend,  
Calliope and Clio, and inspire  
This tale of Merops<sup>(3)</sup>, haply it may blend  
Myth, fantasy, and fable, as of old  
The voices of the rivers and the trees  
Commingled in that loftier story told  
Of Ilion's fall by rapt Maeonides!

Forsake awhile the sacred mount, desert the hallowed ring  
Trod by Apollo's feet, and aid your votary to sing!

#### II.

To sing of man primæval, man co-heir  
With mammoth and with unicorn; his home  
Theirs also, rocky caves and grottos where  
The congealed crystals wrought on floor and dome,—  
The archetypes of all his greatest work  
In after ages,—column, gargoyle, frieze,  
Buttress and span; his chief intent to lurk  
Within some deep recess or shade of trees

In fearful hope and hopeful fear, yet resolute to tear  
His weapons from the antlered elk, his raiment from the bear.

#### III.

Behold him, then, the primal man, in whom  
There latent sleeps the godlike gift of mind,  
Suspended, dormant, as within the womb  
Of the great cosmic universe, combined  
With metalloids and metals, in some cloud  
Of distant world-stuff haply there may float  
The fiery embryos of a radiant crowd  
Of future world-kings, who in some remote

As yet chaotic sphere shall rise to reinforce the throng  
Of those who round the great white throne shall chant the victor's song.

<sup>(3)</sup> *Mēpoū*, the voice-dividing, an epithet of man.

## I V.

To him unknown as we have learned to know  
Thy loveliness, O Maia! from his birth  
The sport of wild convulsion—hail and snow,  
The torrent's roar and the rude tempest's mirth,  
These were his lullabies, while overhead  
The rugged peaks, icebound, were rent and torn  
By blasts from Phlegethon which seemed the dread  
Voices of strident demons, who in scorn  
Of helpless man their levin bolts in frolic fury whirled,  
And shook in wanton play the props and pillars of the world.

## V.

See where the troglodyte, his reeking hands  
Red with the current from his quarry's veins,  
Betakes him to yon cave; see where she stands,  
His partner, sharer of his joys and pains,  
Primæval wife and mother; to her breast  
She hugs her offspring, fortified with fold  
And cincture of warm fur, love's forethought lest  
The puny life should shrivel in the cold  
Of this aphelial realm,—e'en here, despite the glacial breath,  
Maternal love shines bright and clear, the love that conquers death.

## VI.

My mother, O my mother! oft I deem  
That thou art by my side,—what though the thought  
Be but a fantasy, a waking dream,  
Yet I encourage it, for doth it not  
Present me with thine image?—not as when  
I saw thee last in life, thy gaze withdrawn  
To that near shore whose brilliant Pharos then  
Bespoke the haven and allured thee on,—  
Not thus, but as when in thy prime, tender and true and mild,  
I see thee, mother, once again and am once more a child.

## VII.

The soul will oft grow aged ere the clay  
 In which it is imprisoned doth attain  
 Its due development, because a day  
 May blight and make it sere; as when the grain  
 Falls wilted in the jagged lightning's track,  
 Or crushed beneath the cloudburst not to rise  
 Once more a golden plateau from the wrack  
 Of the fierce deluge, though autumnal skies  
 Gleam sapphire-like from dawn till eve,—and how shall hope survive  
 In tainted breasts where guilt and grief leave not the germ alive?

## VIII.

But constant through the mists of rolling years,  
 Undimmed by time, uncankered by disgrace,  
 One hallowed form in memory's shrine appears,  
 One sacred icon nothing can efface,—  
 Thy mother's, child of sorrow!—bitter tears  
 Of blood perchance thy heart has shed since last  
 Her voice fell on thine ear, thy toils and fears  
 And sorrows have been many, but the past  
 Holds no remembrance that can move thy spirit like to this—  
 The memory of thy mother's look, the memory of her kiss.

## IX.

And now, firm-treading o'er the rough moraine,  
 Comes the swart hunter laden with his spoil  
 Of sheep whose musky fragrance fills the plain  
 With that strong essence which the artful toil  
 Of later Byzantine<sup>(4)</sup> shall intermix  
 With mortar in the Holy Wisdom's pile,  
 Justinian's glory, where the crucifix  
 Fell blood-imbruued beneath the crescent, while  
 A martyr's and a patriot's death, the noblest end, was thine,  
 Last of thy race as of the Greeks, O gallant Constantine!

<sup>(4)</sup>In allusion to the legend that in building the cathedral of Saint Sophia musk was added to the lime in making mortar.

## X.

Sweet home! though but a hollow in the cliff,  
 Or wattled hut, pile-founded in the mere,  
 As dear unto the protoplast as if  
 Its walls were marble, rising tier on tier  
 In storied elegance with all that art  
 Can give of strength and beauty: that is home,  
 In desert or in wildwood, where the heart  
 Still finds its centre wheresoe'er we roam;  
 The dearest spot on earth to man, where urged by love the soul  
 Turns always as the needle turns toward the mystic pole.

## XI.

Better the cave, the implement of stone,  
 Lacustrine hut, and the rude couch of leaves,  
 Than factory and furnace, which have grown  
 To be man's social curse, where naught relieves  
 The dull routine, no harmonies assuage  
 The whirling dissonance of wheel on wheel,  
 And hope and love seem blotted from the page  
 Of Nature's volume: are there drugs to heal  
 The cankered sores of Industry, or tonics to restore  
 The vital fluid to its veins and cleanse it as of yore?

## XII.

Call not that home where, in the city's slums,  
 The poor are herded in a grisly swarm;  
 Where one unsullied zephyr never comes  
 To fan the fevered forehead, or the warm  
 Pellucid beams from Him that walks on high<sup>(5)</sup>  
 Find unobstructed entrance, where the soul  
 Grows dwarfed and stunted in a prurient sty,  
 Necropolis of virtue, and the whole  
 Grim offspring of Gehenna's pit in raw putrescence swell,  
 Expanding in its foetid slime to copragoges of hell.

(5)Hyperion,—Walking above,—the sun-god.

## XIII.

The thing that hath been shall be: write ye this  
 Sure proverb, nomothete, upon the walls  
 In senate and in forum; Nemesis  
 Herself is bound by fate, and naught befalls  
 The globe or man but by the fixed decree  
 Of Him whose thoughts are aeons and whose touch  
 On the three world-keys, crust and air and sea,  
 Is rhythmic revolution, causing such  
 Mutations as the sages tell the polar-cycles bring  
 When the swerved index makes complete the equinoctial ring.<sup>(6)</sup>

## XIV.

Antelial winters once again shall lock  
 Their adamantine fetters 'round the zone  
 Whose life is now exuberant, the shock  
 Hypogenous be heard, as when o'erthrown  
 Atlagenes<sup>(7)</sup> slid smoothly 'neath the wave,  
 Metropolis of millions; once again  
 The happy hyperboreans shall lave  
 Their feet in thermal fountains, and the fen  
 Resound with cry of hern and coot where now the Iceking reigns,  
 And towers and palaces arise to grace the fertile plains.

## XV.

O welcome revolution, if it bring  
 To earth once more another golden age,  
 Like unto that the shepherd boy did sing,<sup>(8)</sup>—  
 At once the Muses' prophet, bard, and sage,—  
 On slopes of Helicon, the while his sheep  
 Cropped the green herbage by the Horse's Well,  
 Bright Hippocrene, or surveyed the deep,  
 Calm pool where Aganippe's waters fell,  
 And ruminating saw unmoved reflected flocks below,  
 Where every mirrored fleece shone back like piles of drifted snow.

<sup>(6)</sup>The precession of the equinoxes.

<sup>(7)</sup>Atlagenes, the assumed metropolis of Atlantis.

<sup>(8)</sup>The poet Hesiod.

## XVI.

Thrice happy time, the golden age ere gold  
Was aught but an adornment! Mother Earth,  
Renew thy youth and beauty, as of old  
Bring healthful children to a painless birth!  
What though our marts, where man is bought by man,  
Be ice-concreted and green glaciers glide  
Where sewage-tainted rivers whilome ran  
Their sluggish poison to the ocean's tide?

Perish the past if from its wreck we win a worthier wealth,  
And man's lost birthright be restored of innocence and health!

## XVII.

Survey we now the home, the parent nest  
Of human fellowship, wherein the three,—  
Rude husband, wife, and babe,—are gone. The best  
Of all man's later art is mimicry  
Of what we here behold. A lofty hall,  
Resplendent with a myriad marvels wrought  
In grandest symmetry on roof and wall,  
Each web from Nature's factory a thought

Of the great Master Weaver, God, a product of the loom  
Whose shuttle weaves for men and worlds birth, progress, death, and  
doom.

## XVIII.

Look where the ruddy glow from yonder fire,—  
Assiduously fed—for heat is dear  
To man unclothed by Nature,—turns each spire  
And bulb of stalagmite to gold; the near  
Columnar crystals gleam like rubies, while  
The farther stalactites seem draped in bands  
And scarfs of varying bronze, as in the aisle  
Or nave of some great church each pillar stands

A column bound with rainbow rings when at the close of day  
Through many a rare and pictured pane the level sunbeams play.

## XIX.

Midway within the grotto gleams a fount,  
A silvery basin without duct or course  
Of visible supply, its verge a mount  
Of alabaster like to that whose source  
Is found near well-springed Thebes; many a form  
Of tasseled crystal, feather, flower, fern,—  
Fantastic trifles,—everywhere adorn  
Its marge and sparkle in the tranquil urn;  
While pendent dripstones glint and glow, and in the flickering light  
Appear like Titan arms indued with harness for the fight.

## XX.

Yet this is but a vestibule to halls  
More gorgeous still, whose labyrinthine ways  
No human foot hath traversed, on whose walls  
Nor light nor eye shall linger till the days  
When, following perennial snows, the rude  
Autochtones shall turn where Charles's Wain  
Wheels nightly 'round the pole, when men endued  
With energies more potent shall attain  
This altered region, frigid now, but then attuned to yield  
Demeter<sup>(9)</sup> duty and afford the vineyard and the field.

## XXI.

Lo! where the matron with deft hand divides  
The perfumed flesh and smiling gives her lord  
Choice morsels from the embers, and provides  
The healthful condiment: enough reward  
For her, as aye with woman, to enjoy  
The secret bliss of service knit with love;  
Her worship and best pleasure to employ  
Her mind with cares domestic, as the dove  
Delights to feed her callow brood and to the feeble nest  
Devotes her constant ministry, the shelter of her breast.

<sup>(9)</sup>Demeter, goddess of agriculture.

## XXII.

Judge her by this, her self-denying-soul,  
All ye who speak of woman; measure not,  
O man, by thine her nature nor extol  
Superior sinews or profounder thought,  
When these are thine, by her disparagement;  
For thou art woman born and in the womb  
Where thou wast fashioned her heart pulses lent  
Quick motion to thy blood, and in that loom,  
When first the shuttle of thy life the mystic weft began,  
Her being gave response and hailed another child of man.

## XXIII.

Gross is the meal, immoderate and coarse,  
Their manners brutish; as they eat they cast  
On either hand the refuse, fecund source,  
The midden thus created, of a vast  
Offensive colony of things corrupt  
Which live by putrefaction and which breed  
Disease and death in man or interrupt  
Somatic harmony; but little heed  
The cave folk give to worm or fly, contented to provide  
Their daily food, theirs is the bliss to know no wish denied.

## XXIV.

Deem not their lives a dull eventless round,  
A joyless sequence of unvarying ways:  
Their names are lost to earth, no laurel crowned  
Heroic Nimrod of their race displays  
His prowess in enslaving. Happy they  
Whose footsteps history traceth not in war  
Or legal codes or digests! Speed the day,  
O Power Supreme, when no restraints shall mar  
The primal freedom of thy sons save those prescribed by love,  
When lion shall lie down with lamb and falcon nest with dove!

## XXV.

Yet who among earth's mightiest ever dared  
 To rival these in deeds of high emprise?  
 Not he<sup>(10)</sup> who 'gainst the Cretan man-bull bared  
 The rock-drawn sword of Ægeus: fancy tries  
 In vain to picture foes more horrent than  
 The protoplast encountered,—hugeous bear,  
 Rhinoceros, and monstrous tusker,—man  
 The hunter then was hunted, and the lair  
 He called his home was only his by conquest from the dread  
 And fretful cave cat prowling where her spotted whelps were bred.

## XXVI.

Gigantic proboscideans, mastodon,  
 World-wandering Nippletooth with white tusks, borne  
 Like Seljuk scimetars for battle drawn;  
 Long-fronted bisons with puissant horn;  
 Aurochs and urus, bear and tiger; these  
 He met and meeting vanquished, armed with spear  
 Bone-tipped and axe of silex, and the sea's  
 Balænic monarch churned the waves in fear  
 When in far Thule's shallow sounds, now high above the tide,  
 The patient hunter's flinty dart was buried in its side.

## XXVII.

O first of world-subduers, hail, all hail!  
 Let loftier bards choose higher themes and sing  
 Of warring gods and heroes clad in mail;  
 Be mine the less ambitious task to bring  
 This humbler effort to the Muses' seat,  
 If haply it may move one living heart  
 To throb in sympathy with him whose feet  
 Have left no traces, albeit the part  
 He played on earth was nobly played, the pioneer in time  
 Of that immortal multitude whose footfalls are sublime.

<sup>(10)</sup> Theseus.

## XXVIII.

Hail, pioneer! thy struggle with the blind  
Unbending forces of thine age forbade  
Aught save provision for thy needs;—the mind  
Advances not in states where man is made  
A beast of burthen or a slave condemned  
To barter liberty and life for bread.  
All nature seemed thine adversary; hemmed  
And girt with hostile agencies, thy thread  
Of life was all too frail forsooth for thee to cultivate  
The simplest arts that soften man and modify his state.

## XXIX.

Perchance thou wert, as some have deemed, a child  
Who lineage drew from Eden where thy sire  
Leaped virile into being, undefiled  
By taint hereditary; or the fire  
Divine, such as Prometheus stole to give  
The spark immortal to his form of clay,  
Some mild arboreal satyrs, such as live  
In Borneo's or Sumatra's forests, may  
Have taken from His breath whose Word creative can compel  
Or stocks or stones to put on life and rise His Israel.

## XXX.

Whate'er thine origin, no Paradise  
Knew thee as tenant, for thy lot was cast  
In elemental struggle, when the ice  
Slow-yielding sought the mountain snows, and vast  
Mutations met thy ken while torrents bore  
Alps piecemeal down, and wild confusion reigned  
Where boulder-laden rivers swept the floor  
Of dale and valley: thy strong soul sustained  
Unflinchingly the cosmic strife although thou couldst not see  
God's hand at work by drift and flood producing harmony.

## XXXI.

All time is mere transition, though there be  
Oppugnant eras when two periods meet,  
Rereward and vanguard, on the boundary  
Where each alternately prevails; the feet  
Precursive of Aurora's heralds graze  
The impish heels that follow in the train  
Of her who sprang from Chaos, when the Day's  
Glad harbingers arouse the willing swain,  
And for a season rosy morn appears to linger long,  
As loath to follow in the track of the anarchic throng.

## XXXII.

So man, unsocial, in the pristine years,  
Anarch and monarch, recognized no rule  
Or limitation save his hopes and fears  
As consort, sire, provider; in the school  
Primæval all were children, and they learned  
By instance not by precept: what are laws  
But fetters on our freedom, often turned  
To vilest purpose when the tyrant draws,—  
Or king or mob a tyrant still,—adroitly round a land  
A legal net of ordinance and tightens mesh and strand?

## XXXIII.

The first of patriarchs, his sway confined  
Within one little realm, was there a king  
Whose loyal subjects piously enshrined  
His image in their hearts: what golden ring,  
Encircling conquering brows to weigh them down,  
In after years, though bright with many a gem  
And star-shot<sup>(11)</sup> crystal, what imperial crown  
Shines with the splendour of his diadem?  
His family his kingdom's bound, with simple wants and few,  
He reigned supreme and tasted joys that conquerors never knew.

<sup>(11)</sup>In allusion to the opinion that the diamond is of meteoric origin.

## XXXIV.

Content is happiness: that man is lord  
Of all the world, whate'er may be his state,  
To whom the world no pleasure can afford  
Beyond his present living: though we rate  
Wealth, learning, pride of place, respect of men,  
As things to be desired, wanting these,—  
Their lack unknown,—life may be joyous when  
Sound mind and body vouchsafe perfect ease.

The untamed savage, strong in health, and blithesome as the roe,  
Is happy with a bliss as pure as Fortune can bestow.

## XXXV.

The lowly peasant, whistling from the plough,  
Eupeptic finds his daily meal a feast  
That castled lords might envy; on the brow  
The sweat of agriculture plants the least  
Impress of care: lie close to Nature's breast  
Nor vex thy mind with theses of the schools,  
Or futile explanations, leave the quest  
Of cause and essence to the learned fools

Whose puddles are their universe, so shalt thou live aright,  
Each day devoted to its task, to quiet sleep the night.

## XXXVI.

By nature grave, primæval man could yet  
Hold sportive intercourse with his compeers;  
And then as now the youths and virgins met  
In simple pleasures suited to their years.  
The mimic chase, where the coy virgin flees  
Her ardent lover eager for the prize;  
The artless dance devoid of mysteries,  
But merely gladsome motion, in which eyes  
Oft told a story old e'en then, but yet as new to-day  
As when primæval stripling met primæval maid in play.

## XXXVII.

Or round the glowing hearth the elders sat  
To tell of perils mastered, of the fierce  
And woolly unicorn, whose felted mat  
No flint could sever and no bone could pierce;  
Of cave-bear, mammoth, bison; or perchance  
Some hoary senior spoke of things that live  
Unseen of human eye, the sprites that dance  
Within the forest glades, and those that give  
Their breath to swell the tempest's roar, and those dread gnomes whose  
ire  
Can melt the solid rock and cap the mountain snows with fire.

## XXXVIII.

Or just before the gloaming, when the sun's  
Last kiss had turned the summits into gold,  
And night advancing summoned weary ones  
To rest from toil or play, the senior told  
Of Him, the great All-Father, by whose word  
All things that are sprang into being, Him  
Whose mandates elemental spirits heard,  
And hearing did his bidding when the grim  
Tongarsok,<sup>(12)</sup> lord of fire, rebelled and marshalled all the clan  
Of hell-born fiends in proud revolt ere yet the world began.

## XXXIX.

And oft perchance they raised their song of praise  
With tongue agglutinate, link'd words with flow  
Of oldest root speech, as in later days  
Altaic slopes have heard or Finland's low  
And swampy shores: and while their eucharist  
Went up to God's high throne the sunset dyes  
Of blended amber, em'rald, amethyst,  
And deepest sapphire made the western skies  
Seem like the portals of His heaven, a vision of the blest  
Abodes where, all their trials o'er, the sons of men should rest.

(12)Tongarsok, or Torngarsuk, the Devil of the Eskimos.

## XL.

Here might we leave them at the Father's feet,  
 The while the gates of pearl are opened wide  
 And swift-winged angels from the mercy seat,  
 Glad messengers of precious promise, glide  
 Gage-laden through the æther; but the Muse,  
 Majestic Clio, lays her strong behest,  
 The which no acolyte may dare refuse,  
 Upon the Maker<sup>(13)</sup>, bidding him invest

Anew with life the valiant soul who ventured to invade,—  
 The first of sailors,—Neptune's realm and sought the alder's aid<sup>(14)</sup>.

## XLI.

Invention is but finding, and the arts  
 Have grown from chance disclosures and discreet  
 Observances of Nature, and the parts,—  
 Or screw or joint or arm or valve,—which meet  
 In some great engine stored with latent force  
 That infant hands might waken had their rise  
 Mayhap in shell or leaf, some simple source  
 In Nature's workshop where man's enterprise

First sought and found the types of tools by which with ready skill  
 He binds the elements and makes them work his sovereign will.

## XLII.

Like some luxurious prodigal in haste  
 To pluck the specious fruit from Pleasure's tree,  
 So man, the great empiric, longs to taste  
 In every province, air and earth and sea.  
 With growing appetite from age to age,  
 Inquisitive, he hastens to explore  
 The mysteries of being; to assuage  
 His thirst for knowledge ventures from the shore

Where rev'rend custom sanctions faith, and takes each ancient creed  
 And makes it an episteton that he who runs may read.

<sup>(13)</sup>The Maker,—*i. e.*, the Poet.

<sup>(14)</sup>*Tunc alnos primum fluvii sensere cavatas.* (Virgil, Georgica, Lib. I. 136.)

## XLIII.

They knew not what they sought who the remote  
 Well-wooded Vinland found beyond the wide  
 Atlantic, Lief and Biorn<sup>(15)</sup>, and their boat,  
 Broad-beamed and buoyant, skimmed the trackless tide  
 Free as the albatross; their hazard urged  
 The later Dove<sup>(16)</sup> to take his eager flight  
 Where Guanahani's palmy groves emerged  
 To vouch his faith and glad his sailors' sight.

Thy soul was great, bold Genoese, but greater still the heart  
 Of thy forerunner, Lief, who knew nor astrolabe nor chart.

## XLIV.

Yet who of Triton or of Viking breed  
 May rival him who, venturesome and brave,  
 Forsook the raft of osier or of reed  
 And launched his coracle upon the wave?<sup>(17)</sup>  
 An insect floating on a wrinkled leaf,  
 Or strip of bark upon some tranquil pool,  
 Or shell-housed mollusc stranded on a reef,  
 Perchance inspired him, though many a fool

Coeval raised the laugh of scorn, type of the fools who hurled  
 Their monkish gibes at him whose hand unlocked another world.

## XLV.

O wayside dreamers! ye who with the eye  
 Of prescience see the sunrise ere the mist  
 And fog-banks have uplifted and descry  
 The Day-God's fringes! when his rays have kissed  
 Dome, spire and pinnacle, and when his beams  
 Though myth-beclouded lattice shed a flood  
 Of gold upon the altar stone your dreams  
 And ye are vindicated; martyrs' blood,

Shed at the scaffold or transformed to bitter gall by hate,  
 Makes fertile soil in which the thoughts of martyrs germinate.

(15)Biorn or, properly, Bjorn.

(16)Columbus.

(17)See Horace, Od. lib. I. ode iii., 9-20.

## XLVI.

Like spectral ships<sup>(18)</sup> that sail against the wind  
 The Lord's anointed run their eager race,  
 Each in his generation, each assigned  
 His travail and his triumph, though we trace  
 Their course but fitfully, the constant chain  
 Is never broken, every age begets  
 Its suffering Christ-man on whom all the pain  
 Or sin or striving of our nature sets  
 The seal of expiation and for whom with cruel scorn  
 The world's high priests prepare the cross and plait the crown of thorn.

## XLVII.

Almighty Father! can it be that Thou  
 Dost re-impose the burthen of this flesh  
 On certain of Thy children and endow  
 Vicarial victims with our guilt afresh?  
 I know not, I the Maker of this rime,  
 I seek not, Father, curiously to learn;  
 For I have sinned and suffered and my prime  
 Was wind-swept and afflictive. Lo! I turn

Mine eyes to Thee, O Fount Divine, whose love retrieves the past,  
 Believing that to every form perfection comes at last.

## XLVIII.

Thou art the source, Thou also art the end  
 To whom, centripetally, all things move;  
 In whom, when purged of all that can offend  
 The perfect harmony, all things behoove  
 To lose their special essence: when the soul,—  
 Mayhap through divers incarnations,—finds  
 A cure for will perverted and the whole  
 Entangling net of pride and sin which winds  
 Its meshes round the moral Self shall perish, then Thy Son,<sup>(19)</sup>  
 O God, shall climb the summits where to know and be are one.

(18) "Like spectral ships," etc.: an idea suggested, I think, by a sentence in Longfellow's "Hyperion."

(19) That is, man.

## XLIX.

Like him who first adventured on the sea,  
 Content to rest upon its bosom, I  
 Confide, O Father, all my trust in Thee,  
 My goal and origin, nor question Thy  
 Divine decrees, for I too am a part,  
 However weak, of Thy theophany,  
 And in my joys and griefs and thoughts Thou art  
 Preparing me for that epiphany

When, this world's processes complete, Thy vivid Word shall call  
 All emanations to their source and God be all in all.

## L.

Like drops returning to the ocean's breast  
 What time the labouring clouds their dews distil;  
 Like pilgrim swallows to their earlier nest  
 What time Apollo scales the northern hill  
 And hawthorn buds are swelling; so all life  
 Still upward, onward holds its steadfast way,  
 Each step perhaps the surer for the strife  
 Anterior in time, until the day

When the Erinyes<sup>(20)</sup> shall have purged the guilt from every soul  
 And all creation, deified, attain its final goal.

## LI.

Some trunk's concavity, deprived of pith,  
 His galley, see the mariner afloat,  
 Drawn by the ebb's slow wooing through the frith  
 To where the sportive Nereids take his boat  
 Within their keeping; there on summer seas,  
 Kissed by the wavelet's crystal lips, we leave  
 Him dubious yet triumphant, while we seize  
 Occasion meet a coronal to weave

To decorate Poseidon's brow, if by the Muses' grace  
 Where amaranthine tributes hang this lay may find a place.

<sup>(20)</sup>Better known as the Furies. They are here alluded to in their truer—because older—light as purifiers.

## LII.

Flow gently round my native isle to-night,  
Thou steel-blue Ocean! bid thy breakers lave  
Its borders lovingly where Dodman's height  
Presents a reefless rampart to the wave!  
May halcyon zephyrs fan thy tranquil breast  
Where mild Cornubia bends her craggy horn,  
Britannia's footstool planted in the west,  
Where too thy murmured greeting made the morn  
Of my life's day a dismal dawn with thy divining boom  
Of pity as the life-star strove to pierce the gathering gloom.

## LIII.

What though, a weary exile, half my span  
Denied thy wholesome influence, cooped and pent  
Where noisome exhalations render man  
A frail and forward weakling early spent;  
Where youth precocious dwindles into age  
With scarce an interval of bloodless prime?  
In dreams my yearning spirit bursts its cage,  
And, freed by fancy, once again I climb  
The coombe's green barriers, once again my eager glance is thrown  
To where the Rame's brown finger points toward the Eddystone.

## LIV.

And while I gaze upon thy face, O Sea!  
My spirit grows akin to thine, I hold  
Methinks within my hand the ready key  
To England's greatness: lo! thy waves enfold  
The story of her making, for thou art  
Now as of yore her bulwark and her stay,  
And with the throbbing of thy mighty heart  
Her pulses slack and quicken day by day;  
And in thine ever open page with kindling eye she reads,  
As in some wizard's crystal sphere, her dauntless children's deeds.

## LV.

For me once more the bold Gallants of Fowey  
 Sweep out from Gribben's shade with sail and oar  
 To curb the pride of Winchelsea or—joy  
 Of joys the greatest! scourge the Neustrian shore.  
 For me Black Philip's vultures<sup>(21)</sup> flaunt their wings  
 With greedy arrogance where sea and sky  
 Commingle, while through cove and hamlet rings  
 The fiery call whose echoes shall not die

While English nerves vibrate to hear in every wind that blows  
 How English hearts and English hands can deal with England's foes.

## LVI.

But while communing thus with thee I think  
 But little of man's exploits, I am stirred  
 Like one allowed to stand upon the brink  
 Where life and death encounter and is heard  
 The sound of many waters; for, O Sea!  
 The finite mind beholds in thee a type  
 Of Highest Nature, that Immensity  
 Which only hath true Being; as the ripe

And perfect fruit contains within itself fruit, flower, and tree  
 So all earth's elements may find their counterparts in thee.

## LVII.

As one who, gazing through the Tuscan's<sup>(22)</sup> glass,  
 Discards the guage by which men measured God  
 When priests were potent and the untaught mass  
 Took myths for verities, man's sounding rod  
 Explores thy chambers and his mind, enlarged,  
 Is meeter for creation's scope, the plan  
 Divine with which the universe is charged,  
 To manifest His glory who in man

Is seen incarnate and for whom the stars whose glittering rays  
 Gleam nightly on thy breast perform their canticle of praise.

(21)The Armada.

(22)Galileo.

## L VIII.

The meteor dust of ages strews thy floor;  
Proplasmic matter cleaves unto thy bed;  
Thy teeming billows break on every shore  
With life redundant; in thy depths are bred  
A myriad forms thou hast not yet revealed  
To man's inquiring eye; thy waters hold  
Vast treasure chambers never yet unsealed,  
A thousand cryptic marvels never told,  
And innermost recesses where the great sea serpent glides,  
Sole relic of a time when no obstruction met thy tides.

## LIX.

Thy limpid shadows sparkle with the light  
Of all Golconda's iridescent gems;  
Thy heaving bosom trembles with its bright  
Prolific phosphorescence; anadems  
Of living brilliants decorate thy brows;  
Thy locks are lustrous where the Nereids play;  
And Nature's thaumaturgic hand endows  
The dweller in thy deepest caves, where day  
*Can* find no entrance, with their own mysterious effluence, proof  
That from no creature, great or small, God's kindness stands aloof.

## LX.

They called thee better than they knew of old  
Who named thee Ocean, for thy waters flow  
Like mighty rivers and thy streams enfold  
The earth, diffusing blessings as they go  
Westward surcharged with healing warmth or when,  
Replete with vigour, sweeping from the poles;  
The tropic breezes kiss thy lips and then  
Renew their energy, like strengthened souls  
Who drain the welcome goblet on some well-fought field where they  
Have swung the sword for liberty throughout the livelong day.

## LXI.

I love thee, Ocean, for thou art the bed  
Whereon from youth to age my sires have slept  
Lulled by thy melodies, and Freedom's head  
Is pillow'd on thy bosom; thou hast kept  
Her home inviolate, the seagirt isle  
Whose hills are altars where her sacred flame  
Burns brightly and shall wax in splendour while  
Its jealous wardens, mindful of the fame  
Of those who in the days of old were nourished on thy breast,  
Shall brook no rival on the wave, the realm they love the best.

## LXII.

And by thine ever-sounding shore, O Sea!  
Sleep those whom I have loved and loving lost:  
Within the chambers of my memory  
Their voices blend with thine, and I accost  
Their shadows in the gloaming, when the bridge  
Is swung across the narrow frith which parts  
The nearer Time-shore from the misty ridge  
Whose unremitting influence imparts

A chill to life like that which warns the sailor that some stark  
Ice-wanderer from the arctic zone is drifting near his barque.

## LXIII.

They pass before me and I call their names;  
I meet their glances,—some have pitying eyes,  
And some reproachful; one there is whose claims  
Have challenged retribution and whose cries  
The Furies, hearing, answered: grant, O God!  
That this my expiation may atone;  
For I have yielded to Thy chastening rod  
And born correction meekly; Thou hast known  
The burthen of my penitence, grant, Father, that the tears  
Thine eye hath seen may purge the guilt of boyhood's heedless years.

## LXIV.

O loved in life! I call; O loved and lost!  
Is there not one among ye to rehearse,—  
If haply they see clearer who have crossed  
The Hateful river,—why the father's curse  
Of pride or sensuous frenzy should convey  
Inherent baseness to the spotless life,  
Or stamp it slave to Passion ere its day  
Of quickening in the matrix, why the strife  
With sins that lie in wait, the war that every soul must wage,  
Anatocistic grows the more intense from age to age.

## LXV.

I call in vain, they answer not; I deem  
At times they are but wraiths or soulless shades,  
As unsubstantial as a morning dream,  
Corporeal mists that disappear as fades  
The haze that greets the sunrise. Sin is hell,  
Whose depths nor men nor angels can disclose,  
Whose springs united form a tainted well  
Incongruous with the living stream which flows  
Unsullied through the universe, that runs with love replete  
From God to God until the round of goodness is complete.

## LXVI.

Learn this, O man! thy secret sin will breed  
Like microphytes, pervading all who draw  
Their origin from thee. O woman! heed  
The weighty lesson, the unerring law  
Which men have called Survival,—that the sum  
Of each one's vices forms a heritage  
Of sensuous imperfections that benumb  
And blunt the soul and grow from age to age  
Like some fell parasite that clings to some great forest tree,  
So sin shall waste its victim's soul, and both shall cease to be.

## LXVII.

O Thou whose grace hath quickened and upheld  
The Maker and enabled him to bear  
The breathing of the Muses and to weld  
And forge the glowing numbers and declare  
The story of man's nonage! with Thy name,  
As spelled by mortals, I conclude this song,  
Unskilled to guess if on the tide of fame  
Some kindly hap may place it with the strong

And buoyant vessels that have launched upon the dangerous sea  
Since English Cædmon hewed the keel for Milton's argosy.

## LXVIII.

Thine influence gives an impulse to the lyre  
And tunes the poet's strain in every age;  
From Thee the prophet draws the sacred fire,  
By Thee the sibyl reads the secret page.  
Parturient Time brings forth at Thy behest  
Predestined instruments to work Thy will,—  
Tyrants to scourge or ransomers whose best  
Anointing is affliction; these fulfil

Their function in unfolding Thee, in Thee alone they dwell;  
In every child of man the world beholds Immanuel.

## LXIX.

Thus far this song hath progressed; what its worth  
I know not, whether further than my strength  
Can hold me I have ventured and the earth  
Be fated to receive me when at length  
My flagging wings miscarry. This I know  
And own, O Father! that Thy loving hand  
And gracious eye have led me from the low  
Black depths of Disappointment: lo! I stand

Resigned yet hopeful that my verse may win a modest niche  
Within the precincts of the fane whose heights it cannot reach.

## LXX.

Howe'er it be, the verdict will be Thine,  
For Thou art Lord of Judgments, and the gale  
Of public praise or censure is divine  
Alike for those who soar and those who fail.  
From Thee, the Uncreated, comes the gift  
Creative as an influx, and the voice  
That hails the singer Poet is the swift  
Corroboration of Thy Spirit's choice,  
Which falls as falls the thunderbolt to shun the adjusted rod,  
And throws the minstrel's mantle on the limbs elect of God.

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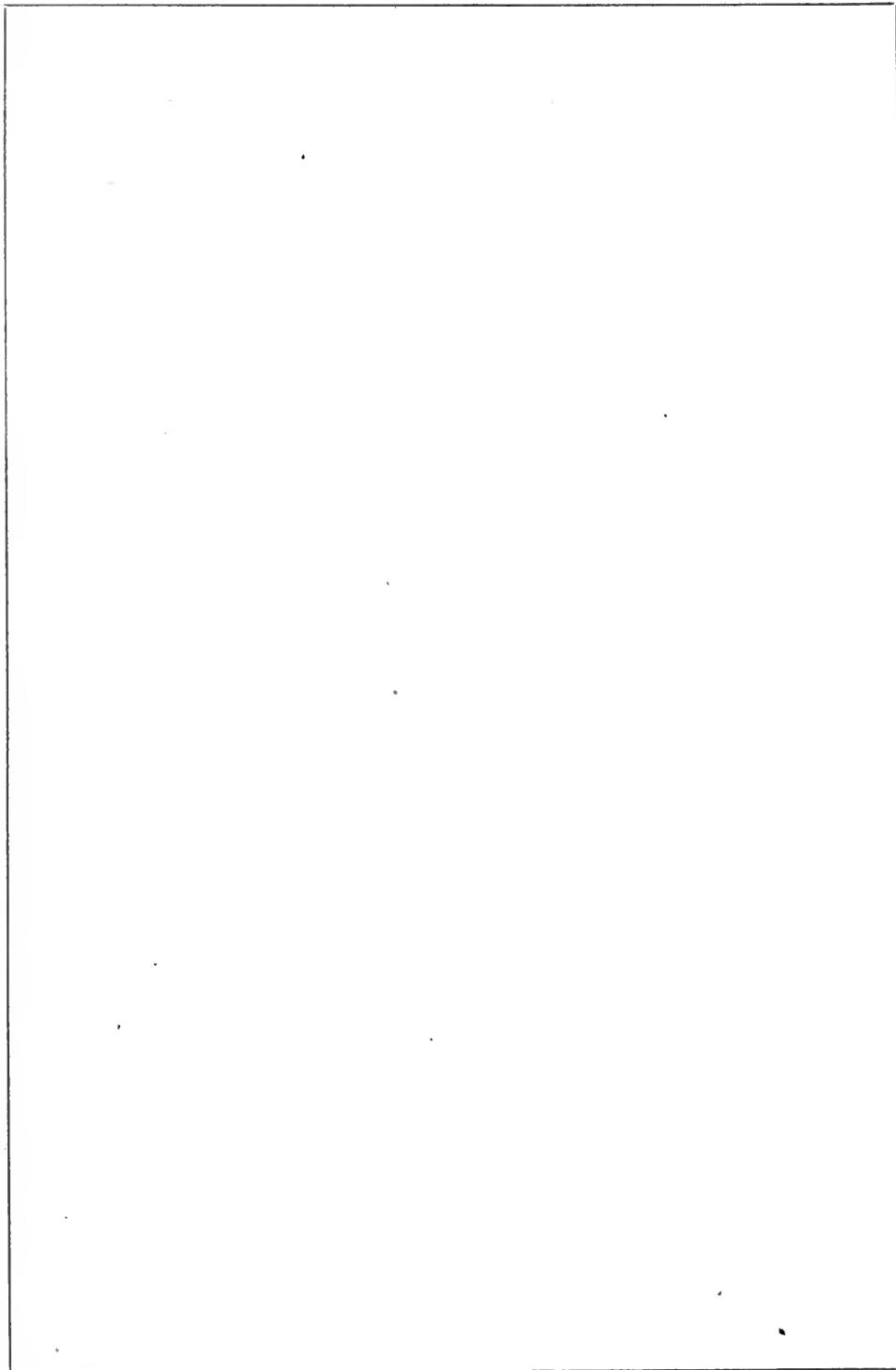
END OF Book I.



# **SONG OF THE AGES.**

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**BOOK THE SECOND.**



## BOOK THE SECOND.

### THE BRONZE AGE.

#### I.

Majestic sisters! once again I call:  
Come, loftiest daughters of Mnemosyne!  
From where Leibethron's silvery showers fall  
And filled Pimplaea swells the symphony.  
Bring but an echo of the heavenly song,  
As heard by Zeus what time with solemn tread  
Around his altar the melodious throng  
Intone the requiem of the godlike dead,  
That we, the restless sons of toil, may catch the strains sublime,  
And hear man's rhythmic footfalls strike the corridors of time.

#### II.

As throng the locusts see they come, they come,  
The earth-born Aryans<sup>(1)</sup> from their pristine plains;  
Two constant streams, as if impelled by some  
Inspired vision of the wide domains  
Awaiting them beyond the mountain walls  
Of Ural and of Taurus and the high  
Snow palaces<sup>(2)</sup> where Indra has his halls  
Whose aether-piercing columns prop the sky;  
Or pressed perchance by Mongol hordes, *adeva* fiends who give  
No sacrifices to the gods by whom the Aryas live.

#### III.

They come, the nation builders, frank and free,  
The Xanthochroi<sup>(3)</sup>, whose eyes reflect the light  
Of heaven's pure vault above them as the sea  
Returns the lustre of a cloudless night.  
They come, the fair-skinned wanderers, with feet  
That turn not back while glory points before;  
Their tramp is steady, like the waves that beat  
And break with muffled-music on the shore.

What barriers shall impede their march, the broad-browed race with mind  
Expansive as the ocean's breast whose bounds they yet shall find?

<sup>(1)</sup>Arya, born of or possessing the earth (F. Max Muller); in later Sanskrit, noble.

<sup>(2)</sup>Sanskrit *him*, snow, and *alaya*, a dwelling-place.

<sup>(3)</sup>According to Professor Huxley's fine classification of mankind.

## IV.

Westward they come, each man a Cadmus; these  
 Shall find Europa, and the gods shall lead  
 Harmonia to their couches; they shall seize  
 And occupy for ever, and the seed  
 They sow shall be the dragon's teeth, red war  
 The harvest of their reaping; they shall sweep  
 The lands as with a besom, till the far  
 Twin isles shall know them and the mounts that keep  
 Their record of Alcmene's child<sup>(4)</sup>, where thankful Time shall see  
 Their noblest issue guard the gates of the great Median Sea.

## V.

Through Khyber's rocky thoroughfare shall flow  
 The eastward currents, till they reach the plain  
 Made wealthy by the sacred rivers: lo!  
 The land of Holy Singers<sup>(5)</sup> where the grain  
 Awaits the willing sickle! They shall learn  
 To yoke the patient oxen, by whose aid,—  
 With subject Sudra service,—they shall turn  
 The rich alluvium, exercise repaid  
 A hundred-fold by Indra's grace who pours with lavish hand  
 Autumnal showers from his store to bless the thirsting land.

## VI.

To venture and to labour and to pray,  
 This was their character; their minds enthroned  
 In spacious tenements where ample play  
 Is given the faculties; their ardour toned  
 By sure control of reason; and their speech  
 Strong, flexible, and copious, such as might  
 Have sounded first in Paradise, as teach  
 Some old traditions, ere the awful night  
 Of sin from disobedience fell upon a shuddering world,  
 And Yimakhshaeta's<sup>(6)</sup> golden age was into chaos hurled.

<sup>(4)</sup>The Pillars of Hercules—Gibraltar.

<sup>(5)</sup>Brahmarshidesha, the region of the Punjab.

<sup>(6)</sup>Yimakhshaeta (Yima) according to the Zendavesta the first Aryan king, who reigned in the golden age.

## VII.

To venture: this their spirit shall impel  
Them ever onward till their restless feet  
Are planted on earth's confines and the swell  
Of Ocean's uninvaded realm shall greet  
Their vanguard with defiance. Glory not,  
Ye trumpeters of Neptune, in their stay;  
Nor ye whose bridled fury fills the grot  
Of Æolus with murmurs; lo! the day  
Shall be when Neptune's self shall lift his placid head to see  
Without rebuke their offspring share the empire of the sea.

## VIII.

To labour: even in their pristine home  
'Tween Oxus and Jaxartes,—names no more  
Remembered by the mongrel tribes that roam  
The steppes,—the furnace fused the stubborn ore  
And smiths first hammered metal; here the arts  
Found crude but healthy nurture, here were born  
The men of skill whose history imparts  
To man his chief incentive; when the morn  
Of the new era shall arise the theme the poet sings  
Shall be the artist mind and hand instead of priests and kings.

## IX.

To pray: at first to God, the One, the All,  
Spirit Supreme by whom the world was made.  
Thrice happy mortals could we now recall  
The antique faith and be no more afraid  
Of sanctuary idols! Burn thy tomes,  
Theologaster, weary not the stars  
With idle concepts where the fancy roams  
From attribute to attribute; the bars  
Are rigid as relentless fate which keep thee shut within  
Thine ectoderm; restrain thy pride! to picture God is sin.

## X.

Accursed craft that used the maker's myth  
 To work the slavery of the human mind!  
 That bent his subtile fancies as the smith  
 To make his image hammers the refined  
 And shining metal till he moulds a face  
 And figure like his own, perchance with arm  
 Hypertrophied with labour! As we trace  
 The line to priest from poet half the charm  
 Is taken from the ancient lore, we drop the myths agast,  
 And like some mitred clowns of old we turn iconoclast.

## XI.

O ye who dwell within the classic shades  
 Where gentle Isis bends to meet the Thame,  
 Whose seal upon their unridged foreheads aids  
 The climbing adolescents when the flame  
 Of genius fails because the empty lamp  
 Of vulgar clay no subsidy receives!  
 Be watchful, lords of learning, that you stamp  
 No obsolescent oracle; the leaves  
 That autumn's finger turns to gold have had their day I ween,  
 No season's change may give them life, no sun recall their green.

## XII.

Thames, Tiber, Seine, and Ganges! on your banks  
 The twice-born Aryans are being born again.  
 Once more the boding murmur stirs the ranks,  
 Once more the nations are being roused as when  
 Great Rudra<sup>(7)</sup> shakes the forest. Be ye wise,  
 Ye Brahmans, and your caste shall haply be  
 Now as of yore their leaders! see ye prize  
 The truth where'er it lead you; though ye see  
 Foundations totter hasten not, for novelty deceives,  
 Beware lest going to Jericho ye fall among the thieves.

<sup>(7)</sup>Rudra, the Storm-god of the Rigveda.

## XIII.

Away with text and commentary till  
 Ye learn the primer of the threefold page,—  
 The ever-open volume where His will  
 God's hand recording writes in every age.  
 The starry vault, the world, the human heart,—  
 Read these aright with unclouded eye  
 And mind unclogged with maxims; then impart  
 The truths ye gather freely; prophesy,  
 If moved, as bold interpreters, nor strive to square and trim  
 God's Word and Wisdom to the moulds of timeworn teraphim.

## XIV.

O venerable masters! while ye pore  
 O'er old traditions lovingly the minds  
 Ye led while in their pupillage may soar  
 Beyond tradition, and the faith which binds  
 Them to finality perchance may yield  
 To Truth's demands, as step by step men learn  
 A broader scripture everywhere revealed,  
 Which tells that Love Ineffable doth burn  
 With equal brightness unto all, the Bible where we trace  
 Impartiality divine that knows no favoured race.

## XV.

O sacred Truth, thou sun of all the spheres!  
 Break through the clouds of Eld, direct thy bright  
 And piercing radiance where the dust of years  
 In hall and quadrangle obscures the light.  
 Bid eye meet eye in candour; bid the weak  
 Be strong to spurn the fetters that corrode  
 And dwarf the intellect;-bid Reason speak  
 Through lips that long have faltered; lift the load  
 Of paltry compromise, O Truth! that gown and hood may be  
 The symbols of a fellowship whose roots are laid in thee.

## XVI.

O Thou Mysterious One whose name I use  
 What time on bended knee I urge my soul  
 To converse with its Origin! excuse  
 The feeble faith that asks Thee to console  
 Yet lacks assurance. Through the mists of time  
 The oracles show dimly, and we hear  
 Thy gentle voice in echoes; thy sublime  
 Surrender and oblation call the tear  
 To eyes that, like the Sadducees', with haughty scorn repel  
 Thy claim to be the Christ of God, the Hope of Israel.

## XVII.

True Man and Brother! in my utmost need,  
 When surging billows break above my head,  
 When blasts from Tophet sway me as the reed  
 Is bent before the whirlwind, be my stead!  
 O'er the broad gulf of centuries Thy hand,  
 Marked with the stigma of the worldling's hate,  
 Traces once more the scripture in the sand,  
 And points the wanderer to the mercy-gate.  
 Be this to me Thy gospel, Lord, the promise fixed and sure:  
 "Neither do I condemn thee child; depart and sin no more!"

## XVIII.

What pen, O Clio, wrote the fateful word  
 Which time confirming turned to prophecy?  
 What ear of man so favoured that it heard  
 The promise of the future, the decree  
 That Japheth's bounds should be enlarged, the tents  
 Of Shem become his dwelling<sup>(8)</sup>? Gracious Muse,  
 Restore for me the crumbled battlements  
 Of old Confusion's tower, let me use  
 That coign of vantage while I gaze on Shinar's plain and trace  
 With fancy's eye the babbling source of nation, tribe, and race.

(8) "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." Genesis IX. 27.

## XIX.

The wavering clouds are parted, and a breeze  
 From steep Niphates sweeps the affluent plain;  
 The doubt-mists scatter and the dreamer sees  
 The hopeless builders abdicate the vain  
 And futile enterprise: the childish lore,  
 The legends gathered at a mother's knee  
 From quaintest pencillings revive once more,  
 And with them half the ancient faith,—I see

Birs Nimrod's winding causeway, note each worker strive to reach  
 Some sympathetic group to claim the brotherhood of speech.

## XX.

Reluctantly, with many a fond regret  
 Lo! Mizrain's clans begin their pilgrimage  
 To Khem's far distant valley; they shall set  
 Their roots below the surface, and the page  
 Of human history shall be theirs till time  
 Has tried and found them wanting, yet their day  
 Shall be full glorious and their sun shall climb  
 To high meridian splendour, their decay

Shall last while empires wax and wane, and cause Oblivion's head<sup>(9)</sup>  
 To turn in wonder to the Sphinx as though old Time were dead.

## XXI.

Unwilling nomads, God shall guide their feet  
 O'er mount and plain until their eager eyes  
 Shall see, beyond the narrow bridge where meet  
 Two continents, the mystic river rise.  
 There shall they find, on Khem's black soil, a home,  
 A fertile land, a land of brick and stone,  
 Concordant with their genius; and each nome  
 Shall be a human anthill, there alone

Shall man presume to cope with fate and raise with cunning hand  
 Enduring monuments to brave the whirlwind and the sand.

<sup>(9)</sup>"Time sadly overcometh all things, and is now dominant and sitteth upon a sphinx, and looketh unto Memphis and old Thebes, while his sister Oblivion reclineth semi-somnous on a pyramid, gloriously triumphing, making puzzles of Titianian erections, and turning old glories into dreams." (Sir Thomas Browne.)

## XXII.

Vain hope! the death he dreaded Mizraim could  
 Nor curb nor conquer; even at his board  
 His mirth was overcast, the spectre stood  
 Between him and the winecup; as he poured  
 The red juice from the flagon effigies  
 Arrayed in cerecloths met his daunted eye,  
 While hollow voices thundered, "Look on these!  
 Eat, drink, be merry, for thou too must die!"<sup>(10)</sup>

Build, Mizraim, mansions for the dead,—the fruit of all thy toil  
 Shall be when peasant hands shall strew thy dust on foreign soil.<sup>(11)</sup>

## XXIII.

The patriarch's curse that fell on Canaan's head  
 Ere yet his thews were hardened fell on thee,  
 O Mizraim his brother! thou wast dead  
 In spirit, sunk in foul idolatry  
 While in thy pride of place the world was thine.  
 Corruption seized thee, and thy carious limbs  
 Were plunged in putrefaction as the swine  
 Roll grovelling in the mire, and the whims  
 And filthy fancies of thine heart thy children deified  
 Until thy very leprosy was sacro-sanctified.

## XXIV.

Pubescent purity, that stood amazed  
 At Nature's revelation, lost its blush  
 Of conscious chastity, thy hand erased  
 The bloom of innocence as one might crush  
 A rosebud ere it opened; and thy gods  
 Were misbegotten monsters,—strange that we,  
 Earth's later children, cherish still the frauds  
 The Nile mud fostered, make the blasphemy  
 Of God-resisting Typhon serve as manacles to bind  
 The limbs of Progress and prolong the slavery of the mind!

<sup>(10)</sup>Herodotus, "Euterpe," 78. A somewhat ghastly provocative to good fellowship and an extreme insistence on the maxim, *Ede, bibe, lude, nulla est in morte voluptas.*

<sup>(11)</sup> Shiploads of mummies have been brought from Egypt and used as fertilizers in Europe.

## XXV.

Mayhap the amercement of thy father's sin  
 Of guilty seeing fell on thee; no glimpse  
 Of Love Ineffable might fall within  
 Thine opaque vision blinded by the imps  
 And slime of Tophet. By thy conscious fears  
 The nations have been tainted: life for life,<sup>(12)</sup>—  
 Dark dogma of damnation! all the years  
 Of man's abandonment of God are rife

With Substitution's sighs and tears: accursed creed! thy dread  
 Persuading wove the crown of thorns that pierced the Sinless Head!

## XXVI.

Through time's dark caverns still the echoes roll  
 Of David's bitter protest, of the cry  
 That rose to heaven from his anguished soul:  
 "Lord, I have sinned! why should my people die?"  
 The scapegoat's bones have whitened in the sand  
 And turned to dust with them whose sins it bore  
 Into the wilderness, and Mizraim's hand  
 Hath long since lost its cunning, yet we pour  
 The vials of the wrath of God on Calvary's Crucified,  
 And make His tender shoulders bear the burthen of our pride.

## XXVII.

Creative Essence, whose high attributes  
 Defy our finite standards, may Thy grace  
 Condone the impious fiction that imputes  
 To Thee our motives! dissipate the base  
 And baneful doctrines by which men conceive  
 Thee as a cruel Apis-dæmon urged  
 To salve thine own prerogatives; relieve  
 The human mind, through ages whipped and scourged  
 By its own bugbears; spread Thy light, that all mankind may see  
 Man needs no scapegoat, God of Love, to make him one with Thee!

<sup>(12)</sup> Herodotus, "Euterpe," 39: compare Leviticus, XVI. 21, 22, for a borrowed rite. For a more rational and humane belief see Micah, VI. 7, 8,—"Shall I give my firstborn, etc.?"

## XXVIII.

In all incarnate let Thy Word and Life,—  
 True Son and Spirit,—dwell with us and lift  
 Our souls to higher levels; bid the strife  
 Of dubious oracles to cease; the gift  
 Of honest speech impart to all who bear  
 The message of Thy Fatherhood, that they  
 Soil not their souls with sophistry nor wear  
 The vestments of the Pharisee; repay  
 The blood of all Thy martyrs, Lord, may every drop they shed  
 In patient witness fall in streams of kindness on our head!

## XXIX.

Enlighten Thou our reason, purge the dross  
 That dulls the intellect, that so man's thought  
 May rise above all partial views and cross  
 The Alps that thwart our vision! cancel aught  
 That tends to idol worship, love of self,  
 Indulgence, daintiness, and lust of praise;  
 To nobler issues than the race for pelf  
 Inspire our children to devote their days!

As Thou Thyself art One, O God, the primal, perfect Good,  
 Bid poet, priest, and craftsman join in kindly brotherhood!

## XXX.

'Twas thus, O Mizraim, that thy day was spent,  
 The earth was thine and thou wast of the earth;  
 Thy children served the fleshpots and they bent  
 Their backs to carnal burthens; from thy birth  
 Thy heart was brutish and thy genius turned  
 To subterranean idols, thou didst sit  
 By thine own choice while yet thy taper burned  
 In fullest splendour by the awful pit<sup>(13)</sup>

Whose sides are lined with sepulchres, the graves where nations fell  
 Who sought like thee their paradise within the womb of hell.

(13) Ezekiel, XXXII. 23.

## XXXI.

Egypt! the nurse of letters and of law,  
Where social order, stated government,  
And commerce had their origin; that saw  
The arts instructive gain development!  
Thy relics are a Bible where we read,  
As day by day unrolls its palimpsest,  
The causes of thy ruin,—thou didst lead  
Thyself to thy undoing when the pest  
Of priestly usurpation passed unheeded through the land  
And Superstition's loathsome brood upheld the tyrant's hand.

## XXXII.

Thou gav'st us gods, O Egypt, but the spark,  
The vital spark, of liberty ne'er shone  
Upon their altars, and the holy ark  
Of Freedom came not nigh thee, thou alone  
Didst disregard the tree whose roots have crept  
Adown the mountains, and whose leaves are stored  
With healing for the nations who have kept  
Their hearts untainted; and the sacred sword  
That patriot freemen love to draw was never forged in thee,  
Where twice ten thousand cities slept in servile lethargy.

## XXXIII.

Two warring elements benumbed thy soul,—  
The negro's passion and the Shemite's gloom;  
The he-goat's promptings nothing could control,  
Corruption's terrors drove thee to the tomb.  
Conquered and conquering by turns, thy blood  
Has mingled with the Nile's black ooze and spread  
A crimson mantle o'er the mystic flood,  
As when Jehovah's foundling gave the dread  
Foretoken to the tyrant, when the smitten waters bore  
Through Pathros and through Mazor's plain the putrefying gore.

## XXXIV.

All nations met within thy gates,—thy peer  
 In art and arms, great Asshur, and thy wise  
 Chaldaean congener, with those that steer  
 Their ships to Tarshish and the land that lies  
 Fast anchored in the ocean: when the tooth  
 Of time hath marred thy beauty, then, O Khem!  
 In that far isle shall man renew his youth  
 And speak of thee as of a thrice-told dream.

Rock tomb and pyramid and sphinx shall tell their tale to these,  
 And Hebrew pilgrims stand amazed before dead Rameses.<sup>(14)</sup>

## XXXV.

The lapidary's symbols still abide,  
 Enduring censors of humanity;  
 Birs Nimrod's ruins chasten human pride,  
 The pyramids rebuke our vanity.  
 O cares of men<sup>(15)</sup>, frivolity of kings!  
 A granite mountain could not guard the bones  
 Of haughty Khufu, and oppression brings  
 Its condemnation; lo! the toilers' groans,

The sighs, the sweat, the sullenness of outraged manhood call  
 To God for justice till the hands of retribution fall.

## XXXVI.

It is the curse of power that it tends  
 To exaltation, Pharaohs, Cæsars feed  
 With flatteries their frailties; Heaven sends  
 No blessing when it gluts the miser's greed.  
 The anointed tyrant deems his right divine,  
 His cringing courtiers bend as to a god;  
 Sleek Dives struts through factory or mine,  
 While toilworn wagelings tremble at his nod.

Unskilled to keep the golden mean, huckster and king deride  
 The patient shoulders that support their luxury and pride.

(14)Rameses II. His mummy was unwrapped by Maspero, June 1, 1886.

(15)*O curas hominum! O quantum est in rebus inane!* (Persius.)

## XXXVII.

O Christ, Thou Carpenter of Nazareth!  
 Inspire Thy ministers that they may live  
 Thy life of self-denial! then Thy death  
 Shall prove man's resurrection and shall give  
 A crown to Labour! kindle in their breasts  
 The ardour of Thy sympathy and break  
 Asunder custom's shackles! hurl the tests  
 And caste-marks to oblivion! bid them make  
 Their Master their Exemplar that in very deed the world  
 May see the banner of man's rights by priestly hands unfurled!

## XXXVIII.

Gethsemane, the mount, the sepulchre,  
 All these we know; in homily and hymn  
 The tears, the tree, the cerements all recur,  
 But not the humble workshop with its grim  
 Diurnal tragedy of sordid toil,  
 Bent back and stiffened muscles, grimy hand  
 And calloused fingers,—too uncouth a foil  
 For chasuble and mitre! Lo! they stand,  
 The frank and sturdy labourers ye fain would win, outside  
 The fanes where Christians emphasize their luxury and pride!

## XXXIX.

Hail, glorious day when adventitious gauds  
 From loom and needle stand no more as signs  
 Of worth in man or woman, when the odds  
 Of rank or fortune mark no more the lines  
 Of social merit! Priest and poet then,  
 Untrammelled by forged fetters, shall conspire  
 To animate and bless the sons of men;  
 The voice of Nature speaking through the lyre  
 Shall call to Pisgah's heights while they who serve the altar stand  
 To consecrate the hosts that march toward the Promised Land.

## XL.

Phoenicia, home of commerce! by the oath  
 Thy grandson<sup>(16)</sup> swore to Philip I invoke  
 The heavenly sisters halting as if loath  
 To light upon thy seaboard, for the yoke  
 The trafficker bears lightly is a clog  
 To higher impulse, and the art divine  
 But seldom sends its search-light through the fog  
 That followed thine eclipse; the Philistine,  
 Thy gallant neighbour, Israel's scourge, has left a loftier name,  
 His warworn buckler rightly hangs in the bright halls of fame.

## XLI.

By Sun and Moon, Earth, Mead, and River! by  
 Thine own great highway, the historic Sea!  
 I exorcise thy genius and descry  
 The sister cities with their galaxy  
 Of banked and beaked sea-castles, quinquereme  
 And argosy, equipped alike for war  
 And commerce, and I note the steady stream  
 That brings the wealth of Sheba and the far  
 Peninsula, the caravans whose fragrant freight shall rise  
 Where sacrificial censers swing in incense to the skies.

## XLII.

Lo! hive-like Tyre issues from the flood,  
 As rose Ashtarte in her blushing shell.  
 A thousand caldrons hold the purple blood  
 Of the pressed mollusc, street and factory tell  
 Of industry and fullness; wealth waxed fat<sup>(17)</sup>  
 And reared its garners higher than the walls  
 Of royal palaces, while Mammon sat  
 With luxury and lewdness in her halls.  
 And dark-eyed captives from the Isles of Tin in wonder stood  
 To see Ashtarte's priests exact the tithe of maidenhood.

(16)Hannibal the Carthaginian: Polybius, VII. 2, 9.

(17)Οὐ βοεῖ ἀγαν παχυθεῖς.

## XLIII.

From Calpe's Strait to Cyprian Salamis  
 The wheeling seagulls flap their ceaseless wings  
 In concert with the oar-blades as they kiss  
 Their mirrored shadows, while the prorate<sup>(18)</sup> sings  
 His matin hymn to Baal as they sweep,  
 Proud argosies rich-freighted, past each ness  
 And castled headland where the wardens keep  
 Their constant seawatch; and the rowers press  
 In eager rivalry to win the prize they most desire,  
 And claim the fleet's pre-eminence for Sidon or for Tyre.

## XLIV.

Bright sea, whereto the world's great empires came  
 And laved their feet through ages! who shall say  
 What changes yet await thee, who shall claim  
 Thy lordship when the clouds have passed away  
 Which gather now about thee? Haply fate  
 May hold in store some pebble that shall smite  
 The dread colossus even as the great  
 Goliath sunk sore smitten when the white  
 Brook boulder fell, or as the huge dream-image was o'erthrown  
 Whose feet incongruous turned to dust beneath the unhewn stone.

## XLV.

The tyrant's hands, that shiver while they hold  
 The rod of empire on the Neva's banks,  
 May seize Byzantium and the Horn of Gold,  
 While Slav and Finn and Kalmuck dress their ranks  
 On either side Propontis. Then, great sea,  
 The Romanoff shall dip his knout and chains  
 In thy blue waters, but they shall not free  
 Or thong or fetter from the shameful stains  
 Of outraged Poland's noblest blood; parturient time shall bring  
 The Slav himself to Freedom's shrine to hear the joy bells ring.

<sup>(18)</sup>προφάτης, or προφέτης, the lookout on the forecastle.

## XLVI.

Build up, ye silent workers of the deep,  
A rosy rampart! suffer, too, thy bed,  
O sea, to lift its bosom that the steep  
Primæval causeway may appear that led  
Huge Libyan mammals to the hither shore,—  
The river-horse and that great tusker whose  
Effodial relics wondering peasants tore  
With straining spade and mattock from the ooze  
Of old Helorus,—burst, ye fires of Vulcan, burst in glee  
When Freedom's offspring prove too weak to keep the Midland Sea!

## XLVII.

Thou hast the keys, Britannia, in thy hand;  
The lion rock of Tarik, it is thine:  
And on Valetta's knightly towers stand  
The emblems of thine empire. Lo! the sign  
Of man's redemption, battleworn yet bright,  
St. George's cross, flies bravely in the breeze!  
Look well, Britannia, that no foreign wight  
Remove the standard or assume the keys.

Let Rooke and Clayton's, Eliott's fame inspire thy soul to guard  
The azure, sun-kissed thoroughfare of which thou art the ward!

## XLVIII.

Phœnicia in her noonday prime begat  
A greater daughter, Carthage, and her feet  
She planted where the queenly Dido sat  
With royal state in Juno's porch to greet  
The wandering Trojan,—lo! the Lovely One,  
Erato, comes unbidden, and the twain,  
Her statelier sisters, smile in unison  
Their hesitating welcome, as if fain  
To spare their votary's tender breast, for well they ken that he  
Who gazes on Erato's charms transfers his loyalty.

## XLIX.

With gentle voice that like a limpid brook  
Glides smoothly on she weaves her subtle spell.  
I see once more the Tyrian sisters look  
To where the ready galleys meet the swell.  
The unbrailed sail hangs loosely, at the stern  
I note the pilgrim father, in his ear  
The cry of duty echoes; Love may burn  
In vain his perfumed torches, when that clear  
Alarm rings o'er the bounding sea, though lulled in Beauty's arms,  
The true man always wakes and sets his face against her charms.

## L.

O Lovely One! though time's auturgic loom  
Has scattered threads of silver o'er his head,  
His heart will throb susceptive till the tomb  
Shall ope its portals to the poet dead!  
The Mantuan Master saw with equal eye  
And even pulses,—spare thou me, O Muse!  
Who looks within thy crystal globe may die  
With bootless longing, yet who may refuse  
Such divination at thy call, thou loveliest of the Nine,  
And hope to win the threshold where the lute is held divine?

## LI.

A marble chamber opening to the sea  
Through lofty arches; from the capitals  
Of slender columns hangs a canopy  
Of gold embroidered purple; on the walls  
The maidens weep for Adon. All that Tyre  
Can show of skillful workmanship is here;  
Pride, wealth, love, luxury, and art conspire  
To grace the haunt Elisa holds most dear.  
For this is Dido's solitude where first she learned to trace  
And read the signs of ripening love in the great wanderer's face.

## LII.

A golden tripod stands beside her couch  
Of purple-pillowed cedar,—yestereve  
An altar where two loving hearts did vouch  
A faith whose fervour nothing could bereave.  
Filled flagon, goblet, philtre, many a sweet  
Provocative to pleasure,—now, alas!  
The mute remembrancers of him whose feet  
With welcome music never more shall pass

Within the threshold of this shrine, of him whose voice could thrill  
The widowed breast, whose glance subdue a queen's imperious will.

## LIII.

The evening star gleams like a crystal tear  
Upon the cheek of Beauty in the west;  
Ashtarte's silver crescent follows near,  
Like some lone galley lighted to its rest.  
Their blended radiance falls on her who kneels  
Within the marble chamber and whose eyes  
In anguish turn where every eye appeals  
Since the first sufferer vainly sought the skies.

Could mortal loveliness prevail to turn the tide of fate,  
Deserted Dido, thou would'st not be thus disconsolate!

## LIV.

Her raven tresses stream all unconfined,  
Save for an azure fillet edged with gold,  
Below her swelling flexures as the wind  
Trails the black storm-cloud o'er the snowy wold.  
Her veil of gossamer neglected clings,—  
A cobweb dew-besprinkled,—just beneath  
Her heaving breast's twin cupolas and flings  
Athwart her glowing loveliness a wreath  
Diaphanous as morning rime whose glittering crystals bear  
Augmented greenness to the mead and perfume to the air.

## LV.

One hand is raised imploringly, as though  
 To claim an instant succour from the mild,  
 Chaste love-star's eye that sees her secret woe;  
 The other held as if to still the wild  
 Commotion in her bosom; on her limbs,  
 Whose tapering fullness prompts to worship, hinge  
 Two gleaming anklets, but their lustre dims  
 Beside the living marble's rosy tinge.

O recreant one! return and find a kingdom to thy hand  
 Whose present bliss may well requite the lapsed Lavinian land!

## LVI.

He comes not back: O breaking heart be still!  
 While time endures woman shall endure  
 The grief that knows no anodyne until  
 Death's soothing fingers work the perfect cure.  
 Unhappy Dido! in that white-cliffed isle,  
 Whereto thy subjects ply the labouring oar,  
 A fairer Helen<sup>(19)</sup> than the one whose smile  
 Beguiled the faithless Dardan shall deplore

In coming years the cruel fate that leaves the rustic free  
 To live and love while princes bear a burthen none may see.

## LVII.

Through dusky cloisters of the Past the low  
 And solemn strains of human sorrow glide,  
 Like some great organ sounding sweet and slow  
 Through nave and transept at the eventide.  
 The dirge of love that stood beside the grave  
 Of its own happiness and hid the tear;  
 Of hopes that had no fruitage, joys that gave  
 A moment's glow and perished; of the sere

And withered friendships that have turned to dust when fortune fled,—  
 The endless coronach that time sits crooning o'er the dead.

<sup>(19)</sup>*Quo, Musa, tendis?*

“The object, and the pleasure of mine eye,  
 Is only Helena. To her, my lord,  
 Was I betroth'd ere I saw Hermia.”

Let no profane hand disinter the secret (hidden in the text) of two royal hearts,  
 one of which shall beat no more for ever.

## CARMEN MORTALE.

Warrior! sheathe thy dinted sword,  
Lay thy buckler down.  
'Gainst the fierce invading horde  
Thou thy blood hast freely poured,—  
Claim the victor's crown!  
Cross thy hands upon thy breast,  
Shut thine eyes and take thy rest!

Pilot! strike thy tattered sail,  
Make thy moorings fast.  
Nor rocks to lee nor gulf nor gale  
Shall cause thy rugged cheek to pale,  
Now thy voyage is past,  
Safe upon the eternal shore,  
Time and tide shall vex no more!

Mother! lay that golden head  
Gently on its bier.  
Could thy grief recall the dead,  
Would'st thou venture then to shed  
One disturbing tear?  
Weep not for the lambs that dwell  
In the meads of asphodel!

Maiden! twine thy wreath anew:  
Lo! the orange bloom  
Wilting frost hath fingered, rue,  
Cypress, and the poisoned yew  
Best beseem the tomb.  
Dream not of thy lover's vows,  
Death hath claimed thee for his spouse!

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Open thy breast, sweet mother!  
Earth, open wide thy breast  
When the night shall fall and another  
Of thy nurslings sink to rest,  
To awake on the glad to-morrow,  
When the Sun of Suns shall rise  
On eyes that have seen thy sorrow,  
Ears that have heard thy cries!

## LVIII.

The wooded crest of Gilead's wall is stirred  
By seaborn zephyrs ready to expire;  
I hear the lowing of a mighty herd  
Whose hoofs have churned the Jabbok ford to mire.  
Beyond the brook's perennial flow I spy  
A halting pilgrim; as his heavy feet  
Approach the shelving watershed the sky  
O'er Ammon's waste is lightened, and I greet  
With fancy's eye the Prince of God, whose seed like him shall strive  
Throughout oppression's longest night and wrestling shall survive.

## LIX.

Castanean-eyed, with visage like the keen  
Sea-eagle brooding on some beetling cliff,  
Lo! Jacob the Supplanter! in his mien  
See resolution mixed with care, as if  
He doubted Esau's welcome. Well he knows  
That here glib tongue and ready wit may fail;  
The cozener's craft is feebleness when foes  
Foregather in the desert; what avail  
The musty cobwebs men term laws, pandects and pundits when  
Their victims seize the sword and call their birthright back again?

## LX.

Shepherd and goatherd, go thy way in peace!  
 Thy brother will not harm thee; thou and he  
 Are types whose counteraction shall not cease  
 While man the unit deems his gain can be  
 A righteous spur and sanction. Noble souls  
 There shall be in all ages, Esau who  
 Shall scorn the sordid publican whose tolls  
 Are sweat begrimed and bloody: these, the few,  
 Shall be the leaven that shall work till the whole lump shall rise  
 With ordered energy and share an equal enterprise.

## LXI.

'Tis thine, O Wrestler! thine to strive with God  
 And make of Him thy partner, lulled in sleep  
 While all things answer to thy hope; the rod  
 Of great Jehovah's anger thou shalt keep  
 Abeyant to thy purpose; when thy life  
 Hangs wavering in the balance and the fell  
 Floods lift their voice against thee, lo! the strife  
 Shall then be holy, God and Israel  
 Shall smite the tents of Amalek, of Ammon, Gebal, Tyre,  
 And make them like a potter's wheel or wood before the fire.<sup>(20)</sup>

## LXII.

Jehovah! By the magic of that name  
 A nomad horde shall win a place among  
 The commonwealth of nations and the flame  
 Of unity be nourished and the tongue  
 Of lisping infants in all lands shall tell  
 His praises and a subject world shall sing  
 The songs first heard in Zion;—how they swell.  
 Those lyric offerings of the poet king,  
 Above the wailing of the world, those sacred strains that blend  
 The God of Kadesh with the One whose mercies have no end!

<sup>(20)</sup>Psalm LXXXIII, 13, 14.

## LXIII.

Be this thy glory, Israel, that thou  
Didst raise thy tribal deity by slow  
And toilsome stages to the mountain's brow  
Where pure Isaiah felt the vivid glow  
Of Light Ineffable, the flash that shone  
On that lone prophet by the Zuyder Zee  
With fuller radiance and revealed the throne  
Of Him whose name and being are To Be!  
Be this thy glory, Israel, thou learned'st to read aright  
The sacred tetragrammaton, Substance, Word, Wisdom, Light!

## LXIV.

And we, the heirs of time, for whom the earth  
Shall don daedalian beauties when the sun  
Of the new golden age shall bring to birth  
Fresh forms and forces,—when we too have won  
The Pisgah heights and view with eager eyes  
The summer-land our portion stretching broad  
Beyond our vision, we shall recognise  
With thankful hearts the sacred hill where God  
Preserved the consecrated flame to light the welkin when  
United faith and science shed their unveiled beams on men.

## LXV.

O harp of Zion! while the world shall last  
Thy heavenly melody shall strike the ear  
Beyond all other music and shall cast  
Its wondrous gifts of healing far and near.  
Solace and hope and impulse, this shall be  
The prelude to the universal song  
Of men and angels through eternity,  
Of slaves made free, of feeble souls made strong.  
The isles shall hear the strains sublime when Israel's house shall fail  
And Jacob's seed shall scattered be like chaff before the gale.

## LXVI.

O Lord of Life! O Quickening Spirit! Thou  
 First Emanation from the Uncreate!  
 Divine Hypostasis who dost endow  
 All things distinctive that may demonstrate  
 The God in Process! with a poet's zeal  
 I laud and magnify Thy glorious name<sup>(21)</sup>  
 In grateful rapture that Thou didst reveal  
 The Father first to poets and proclaim  
 In artless hymns transcending art His mercy and His might  
 From whom all things proceed, the goal in whom all things unite!

## LXVII.

Inspired by Thee, O Lord of Life! the tones  
 Of Zion's harp sound resonant and clear,  
 And rise above the valley of dry bones  
 Where outcast Israel sheds the exile's tear.  
 As in Kaffraria's loam the delver brings  
 To light some brilliant for a monarch's crest  
 Or as the phoenix preens her golden wings  
 In desert sands and builds her fragrant nest  
 Where none may see her sacrifice, so through the awful gloom  
 Of wayward Israel's guilt and fall that harp adorns his tomb.

## LXVIII.

Can these bones live? Degraded, sordid, cold,  
 The Gentile's parasite and eke his scorn,  
 Sweeping his market while they clip his gold,  
 Can these bones live and Jewry rise new-born?  
 Lip-loyal to all princes, true to none;  
 Gath'ring in fields where other men have strowed  
 The seeds of peace and progress; quick to shun  
 With alien craft the sacred duty owed  
 By freemen when their country calls; can such revive to dwell  
 Where David's thirty stood to guard the mount of Israel?

(21) See the Communion Service,—the Preface, "Therefore with Angels, etc."

## LXIX.

Can these bones live? Yes, when from Jacob's stock  
One shoot shall rise whose manly heart shall be  
Warm with ancestral energies to mock  
The recreant maxim of the Sadducee<sup>(22)</sup>  
That Israel hath no waking. Then the voice  
The prophet heard by Chebar shall proclaim  
A people's resurrection to rejoice  
The house so long left mourning and reclaim  
Her barren wastes, rebuild her walls, and raise on Zion's height  
A nobler temple wherein Jew and Gentile shall unite.

## LXX.

Unite in highest worship at the shrine  
Of that great Fatherhood where all are priests  
To dedicate the bread and bless the wine,  
And bid the nations to the solemn feasts.  
Speed Thou the day, O Quickener! when the Jew  
Shall light the torch of liberty and stand,  
No mercenary warrior, with the true  
Knights banneret who hold with steady hand  
Aloft the standard of our rights, the labarum to lead  
The army of man's social hope to vanquish crime and greed!

## LXXI.

Steed of the Morning! fold thy strenuous wings,  
And gently light on yonder peak whose grey  
And furrowed forehead from the cloud-belt springs  
Like some steep islet wreathed in ocean's spray!  
Lightly descend, O Pegasus! and see  
Thy mien be tractable; strike not thy hoof  
To force forbidden fountains; suffer me,  
A timorous trespasser, to stand aloof  
From thee Medusa-sprung! and muse; for this alone I dare  
To stand upon Parnassus hill and breathe its hallowed air.

(22) "To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee." — Byron, *Childe Harold*.

## LXXII.

As in some Thracian gardens where the rose  
O'ertasks the gale with fragrance, every wind  
Comes incense-laden hitherward and blows  
Ambrosial burthens to oppress the mind.  
The marshall'd memories cluster o'er my head  
And baffle distribution, and I hear  
A murmur like the voices of the dead  
Which Dreamland zephyrs bring to mortal ear.  
“Bend low,” they whisper, “child of earth, upon the altar floor  
Where Genius comes to sacrifice from every clime and shore!”

## LXXIII.

Oh! might I reach to such high meed that I  
Were numbered with the acolytes to stand  
A server at that altar ere I die  
And wear the vestments of that radiant band!  
To know that as the swelling chorus swept  
From age to age one note of mine would last,—  
What then were exile or the tears long wept  
For love vows broken and for friendships past?  
Though sterile life's meridian hour, the gloaming Oh! how sweet,  
Dear Land of Refuge! could I lay one laurel at thy feet!

## LXXIV.

O Thou whose purpose passes human thought  
Save that it calls man to renounce, or yield  
His hopes at their fruition! Thou hast taught  
My spirit acquiescence and hast steeled  
My breast to disappointment, and I bear  
The ordeal meekly even as I hide  
The dart whose lesion nothing can repair,  
Or press the thorn Thou gavest to my side.  
One fluttering hope I still have kept, one feeble, glimmering ray  
Has pierced the world's disdain and cheered my solitary way.

## LXXV.

For this I brave the Loxian's wrath and set  
My faltering feet where earth's Immortals trod;  
Though vain the vision, end it not nor yet  
Dispel the dream or quench the hope, O God!  
Vain though it be, it is my all, I gave  
To one fond wish the worship of long years,  
Man's friendship, love of woman,—let the grave  
That hides the dreamer hide the dreamer's tears!

While life remains permit the thought that haply Fame may give  
One modest nook within her halls where this my song may live!

## LXXVI.

Here, from Parnassus, once again I spy  
The world-inheritors, earth-born, whose course  
Is on the necks of nations; from the high  
And many-ridged Olympus to the source  
Of old Eurotas, mount and vale and plain  
Confess the title of their leaf-shaped brands  
And spears of tempered metal, where the stain  
Impairs the lustre of the bronze and stands  
A silent witness to the might of Hellen's sons who bore  
Unwittingly from kindred hands the notched Pelasgian shore.

## LXXVII.

On well-walled Tiryns' rocky height the eyes  
Of young Alcides turn toward the sea,  
While nereids whisper of the isle that lies  
Beyond Cythera, where Pasiphae  
Taught Art to outrage Nature. Everywhere  
The soil breeds heroes and the seed is set  
Whose shoots expanding to the sun shall bear  
Such fruitage as Igdrasil never yet  
Put forth in bud or fragrant bloom, the tree of life shall rise  
Like some great eucalypt until its crown shall reach the skies.

## LXXVIII.

Wide, bold, and free as morning gales that sing  
 When rosy Eos hails the Cyclades,  
 Exultant manhood bends its thews to spring  
 As some young athlete bows his limber knees  
 Before the threshold<sup>(23)</sup> when the stadium waits  
 The signal for the running, or as when  
 The wrestler crouches and anticipates  
 The grip on thigh or buttock: these the men  
 Of Hellas in her mewling youth in whom with added worth  
 The pristine Aryan soul attains another, kindlier birth.

## LXXIX.

A kindlier birth, because their deeds were sung  
 By those whose strains were potent as the lyre  
 Of Orpheus when the gates of Hades swung  
 And softened Pluto granted his desire.  
 Not mine, O Muse! to emulate their songs  
 With tongue less flexible and with soul less free;  
 Be mine the modest motive that belongs  
 To humbler themes and minor minstrelsy;  
 Therewith content, so may I rove on Helicon and fill  
 My heart with music from the myths that haunt the muses' hill!

## LXXX.

That music still can charm the strictest ear  
 Beyond all other melody! as when  
 The shepherd boy of Ascra<sup>(24)</sup> caught the clear  
 Melodious whispers of his native glen.  
 Breathings divine that all unbidden spring  
 From wood and stream and the blue sky above;  
 The voice of Nature bidding poets sing,  
 The Voice Creative bidding mortals love.  
 Divinest harmonies like those Ayr's gentle songster stole  
 From the brown lavrock's nest to cheer the durance of his soul.

<sup>(23)</sup>Threshold, *i.e.*, the stone bar which formed the starting-point in the footrace. At Olympia "the starting-point and the goal in the Stadion were marked by lime-stone thresholds." (Prof. Jebb in Encyc. Brit.)

<sup>(24)</sup>The poet Hesiod.

## LXXXI.

From birth till death enswathed in falsehood, we  
Know not the joy of living, every lie  
We cherish adds its quota to the sea  
Whose ebon waves reflected foul the sky.  
Lies of the school, the forum, and the mart,  
The juggling sophistry of those who steer  
The ship of Progress by an antique chart,  
And hug the quicksands in unmanly fear  
Of that wide ocean tempting man to search its breast and seize  
With hero-soul the isles of hope, the new Hesperides.

## LXXXII.

Not thus thy children, Hellas, in thy youth;  
Their red blood danced with vigour and they saw  
With childlike singleness of eye the truth  
That human happiness is Heaven's law.  
They joyed in living, from the ample store  
Of their vitality they peopled earth,—  
The stream, the forest, and the sounding shore,—  
With forms of richest fancy, at whose birth  
The muses were the midwives who first taught the bard to sing  
And ordered that in fancy's realm the poet should be king.

## LXXXIII.

And from the treasure chamber of his mind  
The poet chose appellatives and named  
The bright creations, and to each assigned  
His place and function; thus compactly framed  
There rose the pantheon; the goodly halls  
Whose mazy courts the diligent may tread  
And solve the riddles of the sculptured walls,  
And learn the deathless wisdom of the dead,  
The fables where great Verulam with kindred soul could read  
The Nature-mysteries that lay beneath the Pagan's creed.

## LXXXIV.

A living creed to him who loves the hills  
And meads where piping Pan may still be heard;  
A joyous creed to him whose bosom thrills  
When Philomela wakes her evening bird.  
The creed of Poesy, the art divine;  
Of veiled Philosophy that still must strive  
To draw the diamond from the secret mine;  
The creed whose winsome symbols still survive  
As iridescent gems that gleam in realms that never knew  
The spell that fancy wove around the bright Olympian crew.

## LXXXV.

Fain would I linger in thy lap, fair Greece!  
Anear the Shining Rocks in Delphi's glen;  
There would I seek the navel-stone, nor cease  
Until the oracles should speak again.  
For Pan still lives, and they who hailed him dead,  
What time with impious hands they spoiled the shrine  
Of Phoebus, time hath tested and instead  
Of bread they render stones and gall for wine,  
While craving millions ask to see the Christ that was to come,  
And failing curse the stars because the oracles are dumb.

## LXXXVI.

The bitter cry of stunted souls, the wild  
Ebullience of the helot, cannot these  
Be lulled to sleep and man be reconciled  
To live with Nature in harmonious ease?  
Descend, O Pythian! as of old and bring  
The bow thy ready fingers found at birth!  
Draw the notched arrow to the tensive string,  
And slay the dragons that lay waste the earth,  
Corruption, luxury, and greed, the ethics of the mart,  
That weld a golden shackle on the promptings of the heart!

## LXXXVII.

Descend, O Delian! once again and guide,  
As erstwhile Cretan merchantmen were led,  
These later traders to Parnassus' side  
And lay thy mitra on each drooping head!  
So shall they rise thy priests, to immolate  
The misbegotten progeny, the base  
Herd of false prophets that usurp the gate  
And sing for drachmæ in the marketplace.

So Competition's curse shall fail and man regenerate see  
The welfare of the hive impart contentment to the bee.

## LXXXVIII.

So may thy spirit, mountain land! return  
And wake in us the Spartan hardihood,  
The Attic ardour till our bosoms burn,  
The Theban patriots' lofty brotherhood!  
That we whose thoughts are moulded to the speech  
To which all tongues pay tribute, may advance  
The frontiers of man's commonwealth and reach  
The broad savannahs where the views enhance  
Our aspirations and the wide horizons merge in dim  
Suggestions of new realms that lie beyond the circle's rim.

## LXXXIX.

Demeter then shall see her bounteous gifts  
Consigned to righteous stewards, nor abused  
As pawns to justify the gamester's shifts;  
The wealth of mine and factory diffused  
No harpy's claws shall grapple; Labor then  
Shall yield to Arrogance nor tithe nor toll;  
But white-robed Peace shall come to live with men,  
And love collective animate the whole:  
Benevolence shall spurn the bounds of mountain, river, sea,  
And kindly nations strive to win the world's hegemony.

## XC.

And Art shall sit again at Nature's feet  
To learn how simple are the mysteries;  
And Music, Letters, Sculpture, Learning meet  
Like sister children at their mother's knees.  
Beauty shall flourish, every land shall own  
Its thaumaturgic agency, and this  
Shall turn each temple to a Parthenon,  
And give each city an Acropolis  
Wherein, obedient to the skill of some great master's hand,  
Chryselephantine types of Love and Victory shall stand.

## XCI.

And Liberty, the jewel of man's soul,  
Without which life were putid, shall assume  
A more than Grecian lustre and the roll  
Of Aryan kinsmen shall again resume  
The epic broken when the fateful pen  
Within the fingers of Demosthenes  
Wrote Freedom's farewell to the sons of men,  
And suppliant Hellas clasped the despot's knees.  
Then one great Parliament shall hold the legates of the world,  
Where multitudes shall throng to see the union flag unfurled.

## XCII.

And lo! as in the hero-age, the state  
Of man shall then be simple: save that he  
Must yield to that inexorable fate  
Which none may hinder yet which all foresee,  
His happiness shall be complete;—alas!  
This pain supreme nor time nor love allays!  
The trickling sand must dwindle in the glass,  
And living is but dying; when the days  
Draw near to lay the burthen down the retrospective eye  
Perceives man's misery consists in knowing he must die.

## XCIII.

Well spoke the sophist,<sup>(25)</sup> all that is is poured  
 In endless flux, the spectre stands beside  
 The nuptial couch, the cradle, and the board,  
 A silent homilist restraining pride!  
 The earth is but man's sepulchre<sup>(26)</sup>, the whole  
 Great world of man may be his monument  
 If he but follow with unselfish soul  
 The path heroic where no sentiment  
 Obscures duty, if upon the good old Roman tree  
 Of civic truth he graft the shoot of Christian chivalry.

## XCIV.

Lo! where the yellow Tiber sweeps the feet  
 Of Palatinus and the Aventine!  
 Pause for an instant and survey the seat  
 Where the three clans<sup>(27)</sup> shall gather and combine  
 To found the city. This is Rome, where Force  
 Shall fence itself with statute and decree,  
 And the world's lie be sanctified; the source  
 Whence iron-hoofed and harsh Legality  
 Shall propagate its counterfeits, and Politics which spreads  
 The maxim that the highest good consists in counting heads.

## XCV.

*Patres* and *Plebes*, side by side they grew,  
 One Roman people, yet how wide apart  
 In all that makes for brotherhood! the few  
 Born to consume and rule; the major part  
 Mere villeins, clods pertaining to the soil,  
 Winning by piecemeal every human right;  
 At first content to eat and sleep and toil  
 And read their franchise by their patrons' light!  
 A patient multitude well-pleased by slow degrees to rise,  
 And, like all patient multitudes, the slaves of Compromise!

<sup>(25)</sup> Protagoras.

<sup>(26)</sup> Thucydides, II, 43: Ἀρδρῶν γὰρ οἱ πισταὶ πάσαι γῆ τάφοι, κ. τ. ἡ.

<sup>(27)</sup>The Ramnes, Tities, and Luperces. "Rannenses ab Romulo, ab T. Tatius Titieuses appellati: Lucerum nominis et originis causa incerta est." Livy, I. 13. Yet there can be little doubt that these are primitive tribal names.

## XCVI.

Yet theirs the virtues by which states increase,—  
 Simplicity and truth and steadfast zeal  
 For home and country. When the hands of Greece  
 Grow faint with struggling shall Rome's commonweal,  
 Like some great crucible, commix and blend  
 Competing elements and haply draw  
 All subject peoples to one certain end,  
 One common principle, the reign of law,  
 And perishing shall still bequeath emollients to assuage  
 The grim and gory truculence of the fierce iron age.

## XCVII.

Leave we, twin Sisters, ye who are my guides!  
 These cinder heaps of Pluto where the rude  
 Autochthones beheld the ocean's tides  
 Retreat with horrid hissing unsubdued  
 Though neighbouring hills discharged their fiery rain,  
 And earth affrighted tore her rugged breast!  
 Forsaking these, press onward in the train  
 Of the great vanguard hastening to the west,  
 Where Partholan's<sup>(28)</sup> bronze sword doth point to Inver Sceine's head,  
 Or where the blue-eyed Yavana turn north with eager tread!<sup>(29)</sup>

## XCVIII.

First of the Keltai! draw your barques to shore,  
 For this is Inisfail, the Isle of Fate!  
 Unstep the mast and ship the guiding oar,  
 Behold! the Woodmen<sup>(30)</sup> resolutely wait  
 Within their bosky fastnesses; they bend  
 The supple bow and poise the flinty spear;  
 Wild freedom's martyrs driven to defend  
 Their last asylum; further flight is here  
 Beyond their wishes, step by step the arms of bronze have hurled  
 Their relics westward till they touch the confines of the world.

(28)Partholan, according to legend the leader of the Pelasgic Kelts, who first entered Ireland at Inver Sceine, *hodie* Bantry Bay or the Kennmare estuary.

(29)Yavana, the Young Folks, ancestors of the Germans.

(30)The forest tribes or Iberic aborigines of Europe.

## XCIX.

North, east, and west, by lough and hill and glen,  
 Firbolg, Nemedian, tribe on tribe they spread,  
 Danann, Fomorian, and the later men,  
 Galam's Milesians with the kingly tread!  
 Their blood to-day flows nimbly through the veins  
 Of stalwart world-subduers, lo! the spark  
 That lighted Heremon to the fertile plains  
 Where gentle Barrow glides toward the dark  
 Child of Slieve Bloom's Silurian breast gleams faintly yet still gleams  
 Where the worn Maker exiled sits and mourns his youthful dreams!

## C.

And Kymric blood is likewise his, perchance  
 Of some Cornubian Druid-bard who gave  
 His unarmed bosom to the Roman lance,  
 And fell a martyr where he might not save.  
 Keltic in all, the song I sing shall bear  
 No taint of lucre; lacking though the fire  
 Of loftier lays, my modest verse shall wear  
 No badge of service to disgrace the lyre.  
 Be mine the Vates' part and lot to prophesy and sing  
 Such soothfast words as Merlin sang before Tintagel's king!

## CI.

Or he whose wizardry recalled the bloom  
 Of old Romance and gentle trouverie,  
 Whose loyal passion raised on Hallam's tomb  
 A stately altar to Mnemosyne.  
 A noble shrine where the chaste soul may learn  
 That sacrifice is triumph, loss is gain;  
 Where day and night the snowy tapers burn,  
 And cloistered arches echo the refrain  
 At evensong when anthems stir the banners like a breath,  
 And *Nunc Dimittis* is the heart's calm welcome unto Death.

## CII.

Old Time, thou art a dullard! could'st thou not,  
 While sparing cromlechs, menhirs, monoliths,  
 Have saved the mystic lore the Druids taught,  
 Retained the wisdom hidden in their myths?  
 Then haply we had heard the tale of him,  
 Mysterious Hesus, whom the white-robed throng  
 Adored in forest temples vast and dim  
 With pomp and sacrifice and sacred song;  
 Then might the Druid's soul awake, then might his voice once more  
 Instruct us that man treads the paths his feet have trod before.

## CIII.

What say you, brothers, ye for whom the sun  
 Hangs tottering o'er the western precipice?  
 What, brethren, if the course so nearly run  
 Be, as it were, a trial heat, and this  
 Approaching sunset but a call to sleep  
 Until the morrow when,—anointed, nude,  
 And lithe,—ye reach the threshold, fit to leap  
 Toward the barrier with your strength renewed?  
 Perchance with some faint memories of the preceding day,  
 Premonishments of stumbling-blocks that thwart the narrow way?

## CIV.

Could captured Proteus, told to prophesy  
 Concerning man's hereafter, e'er reveal  
 A greater mystery than those which lie  
 Around us unregarded? Why appeal  
 For proofs to spheres beyond our mortal ken,  
 When kindly Nature spreads an open page,  
 And bids us read God's message unto men  
 Where life perennial never comes of age?  
 Dyes the medusa's crystal bell and bids each pulp confirm  
 The truth of immortality by tentacle and germ?<sup>(31)</sup>

(31) This thought is, in a measure, borrowed from an article by Sir Edwin Arnold, contributed, I think, to the *Fortnightly Review* some years ago.

## CV.

Ah, brothers! could we stand beside the loom  
 Where lives are woven and take up the thread,  
 And know the pattern of the past, the tomb  
 Would be a welcome shelter to the dead!  
 For then the soul, re-clothed with flesh, would rise  
 On stepping-stones of former faults<sup>(32)</sup>, and each  
 New birth were certain progress till the prize  
 Of sinless being were within man's reach;  
 And then, blest thought! its cycle filled, the ransomed soul would fall  
 A crystal drop in Heaven's sea and God be all in all.

## CVI.

Gaelic or Kymric, lo! their kindred blood  
 Found common evolution. Happy isles!  
 Where Famine came not though men understood  
 Nor finance nor taxation, nor the wiles  
 Of those who buy in cheapest marts and sell  
 In dearest, for whose needs the world has made  
 Its later ethics and abolished Hell  
 And every dogma that could hamper trade!  
 Thrice happy clansmen! who had need of little wealth beside  
 The flocks and herds that grazed the meads or roamed the mountain side!

## CVII.

Oh! could some Poet-Druid now rehearse  
 The simple blessedness of far-off times,  
 How would men linger o'er the antique verse  
 And bid the modern poet turn his rimes  
 To loftier purpose than a roundelay,—  
 To sing of justice with a voice as clear  
 As that of some Milesian Ollamh Sai<sup>(33)</sup>,  
 Whose counsels kings and fathers loved to hear,  
 Some white-haired Brehon whom his clan beheld with secret awe  
 Blend Filidecht and Fenechas, prophetic song and law!

<sup>(32)</sup> "That men may rise on stepping-stones  
 Of their dead selves to higher things."      *In Memoriam.*

<sup>(33)</sup> Ollamh (pronounced *Ollauv*) Sai, nearly equivalent to Doctor of Philosophy; an *ollamh fili* was a fully graduated poet (or *vates*); the *fene* or lawyers as a distinct school seem not to have preceded Christianity.

## CVIII.

As with the hardy Yavana, the slow  
 And steadfast Germans whose determined course  
 From Bactria to the Baltic seemed the flow  
 Of some great ocean-seeker from its source,—  
 The kilted Gael never bent the neck  
 To wear the collar of imperial Rome:  
 Oh age of bronze and liberty! we reck  
 No more of Freedom than the name; her home  
 Hath vanished from our stagnant fens to some secluded hold  
 Where Lybian pygmies still evade the Christian's greed for gold.

## CIX.

For us no more the life of wood and stream,  
 Though Nature woo us to her kindly arms!  
 For us, alas! the clank of wheel and beam,  
 With reek of furnace, where the pallid swarms  
 Sleep, eat, and labour, labour, eat, and sleep,  
 And hug the falsehood that the world has grown  
 Akin to Paradise when bread is cheap  
 And every dog contented gnaws his bone!  
 Where fleshly fools o'erheated rush to marriage beds and breed,  
 Like rodents in some crowded cage, a hasty, nerveless seed!

## CX.

All-Father! give me back my lowly cot  
 Mid Appalachian solitudes or guide  
 My wearied spirit to some lonely spot,  
 Some other Pitcairn, hidden in the wide  
 Pacific's bosom, rather than prolong  
 This travail where dull Helots kiss the rod!  
 Or bid the PEOPLE rouse them and be strong  
 To fetter Faction! Consecrate, O God!  
 The new apostles of Thy Christ, let fiery tongues descend,  
 With Pentecostal potency bid social trespass end!

## CXI.

And you, apostles of the great crusade!  
 Gird up your loins, for lo! the hour is nigh!  
 Corruption trembles, Falsehood stands dismayed,  
 The labarum of promise fills the sky!  
 "By this sign conquer!" Lo! the Church of Christ,  
 Her anaesthesia ended, breaks the chain  
 That Constantine y-forged and Henry spliced,  
 And God's free Spirit ranges earth again

To bid the Saxon loafward turn the ploughshare to the land,  
 And generous Kelts again display their pristine open hand!<sup>34)</sup>

## CXII.

The hour is nigh: Oh! well for those whose lot  
 'Twill be to sojourn in that blithesome world,  
 And share its happiness when time hath wrought  
 The harvest now a-ripening and unfurled  
 The Aryan's charter! Peace and plenty then,  
 With equal rights and active brotherhood,  
 And sweet simplicity shall bring to men  
 The antique joy of living with the good  
 Enhanced by knowledge rightly used, when Science shall employ  
 Her touchstone in the crucible to purge it from alloy.

## CXIII.

To thee, great land! whereto my homeless heart  
 Was drawn what time, like Noah's dove, I flew  
 From seagirt Albion, could the Maker's art  
 Unseal the tomb and open to the view  
 Thy buried mysteries, then would I sing  
 A Past more ancient haply than the birth  
 Of Partholan or Heber or the king  
 Who learned by hunting to subdue the earth,  
 Nimrod, the first to demonstrate the bitter truth that might  
 Transcends all other claims and prove that force dictates the right!

(34)The title *lord* is said to come from *hlaford*,—*i. e.*, *hlaf-weard*, or bread-keeper. From the Irish *flaith*, a tribal king, comes also *flaithreamhail*, or open-handed hospitality.

## CXIV.

Then at my bidding would the Muse disclose  
 The tale of that lost race whose monuments  
 Might hide a buried nation, or of those  
 Whose obelisks and sculptured pediments  
 And glyphs and pyramids alike defy  
 Time's fretful tooth and man's researches where  
 Palenque's, Copan's, Uxmal's walls stand high  
 Above the later forests; or declare  
 From what primæval founts Votan and Manco Capac drew  
 The calendar of Mexico, the tithings of Peru.

## CXV.

The age of bronze o'erlaps the iron age  
 On Anahuac's causeway, where the fierce  
 Pursuing Aztecs strive with vengeful rage  
 To merit Huitzil's<sup>(35)</sup> favour; lo! they pierce  
 The hauberk and the morion and hurl  
 Their flinty javelins 'gainst the tempered steel;  
 Stone, bronze, and iron in a fiery whirl  
 Of blood and terror make their last appeal  
 To war's arbitrament, the while the teocallis flow  
 With gore where priests propitiate the gods of Mexico.

## CXVI.

And lo! Christ's cross becomes once more the sign  
 Of retribution; proud Tenochtitlan  
 Must drain the goblet where the deadly wine  
 Of righteous judgment is prepared for man!  
 Let loose the hell-dogs! as when Carthage paid  
 Her awful forfeit, or as when the doom  
 Pronounced against Jehovah's temple made  
 Jerusalem a Golgotha and tomb!  
 Where Tophet's fiends held jubilee do Thou, O righteous God!  
 Pour out the vials of Thy wrath and wield Thy chastening rod!

<sup>(35)</sup>Huitzilopochtli, the Mars of the Aztec pantheon. The allusion in the text is to the famous retreat of the Spaniards from the city.

## CXVII.

From Vilcanota's slopes the reedy shore  
 Of Titicaca sparkles in the sun,  
 And Vilcamayu's rapid currents pour  
 A silver tribute to the Amazon.  
 Land of the Incas! cross and shrine in thee  
 Are but as dwarfed exotics, for thou art  
 Thyself an altar where the spheres may see  
 The mighty mother, Nature, lift her heart

To Him whose Thought first gave her life, where peak and torrent raise  
 Their *In Excelsis Gloria!* and swell their Maker's praise.

## CXVIII.

Three hundred times have Cuzco's sons bewailed  
 And Caxamarca's maidens yearly wept  
 The fateful day when Atahualpa<sup>(36)</sup> failed  
 And the great Sun-Lord's righteous vengeance slept.  
 Three hundred years of patience, yet the soul  
 Of old Peru survives the Inca's loss,  
 And Manco Capac's doctrines still control  
 A race constrained to bear the Christian's cross.

O Christ! where dark Pizarro's sword put Thee to open shame  
 Oppression's bitter memories still cluster round Thy name!

## CXIX.

But here, where God's great mountain clusters rise,  
 Peak over peak in one unbroken chain,  
 Where Earth's fervent furnace heats the skies,  
 And cloud-crowned chimneys hurl their fiery rain,  
 The growths of Egypt or of Palestine,—  
 Though nursed in Europe for a thousand years,—  
 Seem puny nurslings; where the Hand Divine  
 Withholds encouragement and Nature rears

A temple to the Unknown God and leaves the portal wide  
 She builds no transepts for the myths that wait on human pride.

<sup>(36)</sup>Atahualpa, the last independent Inca, barbarously murdered August 29, 1533.

## CXX.

Perched on the poop of caravel and barque,  
When Genoese or Briton left the shore  
To find a world or refuge, stood the dark  
Apollyon of the nations; swift and sure  
Was Superstition's progress, like the fell  
Disease the turbaned pilgrim bears abroad  
From the great mosque of Mecca and the well  
Of Zamzam and the stone where Ishmael trod.

And lo! the hellborn twins, Despair and Bigotry, released,  
Gave Plymouth Rock and Mexico to presbyter and priest!

## CXXI.

Unsightly demon! but for thee the world  
Had long been blest: thou causest man to shrink,  
A drivelling dotard fearing to be hurled  
Through shades Tartarean when he nears the brink  
Of Death's dark river! we are all thy slaves,  
O Superstition! and the dædal Earth  
Is septic with the odours of her graves,  
While phantom shrouds envelope us from birth.

Our very mirth is overcast with fear, we brisk and play  
Like sacrificial victims urged to frolic while they may.

## CXXII.

The Aryan surplus, landless and oppressed,  
Thy constellation tempted o'er the foam,  
Great Land of Refuge! in thine ample breast  
The homeless ones have found a kindly home.  
And thine the duty that thou canst not shun,  
And thine the guerdon of the enterprise,—  
To blend the discrete elements in one,  
To see the Phœnix plume her wings and rise  
On widespread pinions higher than her regal parent went  
The ichor from whose wounds first gave the nestling nourishment.

## CXXIII.

What though the lurid and malefic star  
 Whose baleful light was kindled with the flame  
 Of this my earthly being from its far  
 Æthereal moorings scintillates the same  
 Wan presages to this new hemisphere,—  
 A ghastly nimbus constant to my head?  
 Though friends forsake me and though ties more dear  
 Than friendship's bonds are ruptured as a thread,  
 Or withered in the chilling frost of failure, not to thee  
 Be blame, great land whose golden hope allured me o'er the sea!

## CXXIV.

A golden hope, yet not the hope of gold,  
 Drove me to seek thy hospitable arms;  
 My yearning spirit, weary of the old  
 Time-buttressed cheats, and tempted by the charms  
 Of Nature and of Freedom, turned to thee,  
 Nor recked of let and hindrance;—lo! the cot  
 My hands have builded other eyes shall see  
 And other feet shall rove the lawn I bought  
 From old Silvanus by my toil, while I regretful roam  
 A lonely exile shorn of strength to seek another home!

## CXXV.

But yesterday the painted savage stood  
 Where now I stand, and saw with doubtful eye  
 The daring Norman<sup>(37)</sup> venture down the flood  
 Or marked Loyola's messenger float by.  
 On either hand the sea-like prairies spread  
 A broad expanse intact of spade or plough,  
 Save where some unknown barrow hid the dead  
 Of unremembered nations, and where now  
 The human tide has risen high; to-day the fertile plain  
 Where once the gray wolf chased the deer stands rich with ripening  
 grain.

<sup>(37)</sup>Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle: "Loyola's messenger," Jacques Marquette, of the Society of Jesus.

## CXXVI.

Forbid it, Heaven! that this heritage  
Should fall to prodigals or knaves betray!  
Be this the theatre whose spacious stage  
Shall show the climax of the long-drawn play  
Of man's redintegration. Lo! mine eyes  
Are dazzled with the vision, for I see  
The commonwealth of nations take its rise  
And hear the music of a world made free!  
I see the prison doors unbarred, and Crime and dark Despair  
Forsake their haunts like unearthed moles and breathe a purer air!

## CXXVII.

Arise, imperial virgin of the west!  
Arise and break the bands of ancient wrong  
That odious hands have braided o'er thy breast,  
Before Corruption's trammels wax too strong!  
The patched and timeworn raiment of dead creeds  
And systems atrophied while thou wast yet  
An artless suckling cannot fit thy needs  
Now that thy lissom limbs are firmly set  
And thou canst wield Athena's spear and, conscious of thy might,  
In white-armed majesty prepare to vindicate the right.

## CXXVIII.

Thou art a debtor to the waiting world,  
Whose yearning gaze has never veered from thee  
Since thy great martyr's loyal hands unfurled  
Redemption's charter to a race made free.  
Advance thine ægis and a million brands  
Shall flash responsive to thy battle call:  
"Io Triumphe!" and the sordid bands  
Shall flee for refuge to the donjon wall  
Where Vested Interest holds his court, the citadel whose stones,  
Cemented by a people's blood, are reared on human bones.

## CXXIX.

Draw close the leaguer! bid the trumpet sound!  
Mark how the frowning turrets sway and reel  
When twice a million footsteps beat the ground  
Where Freedom's warriors storm the grim Bastille!  
Brief time for righteous judgment! this their hold  
Shall be the caitiffs' sepulchre, a sign  
For future generations when the mould  
Shall gather on the ruins and the kine  
Shall crop the long, lush grass and turn their deep mysterious eyes  
To where some relic-hunting sage his spade and mattock plies.

## CXXX.

Lo! where Urania waits upon thy star,  
America! to free thy horoscope  
From evil occultations: naught shall mar  
Thy natal promise, harbinger of hope  
To all the nations! for thou art the sure  
Pledge of the coming age when Love and Truth  
Shall form a golden bridge from shore to shore,  
And Man regain the lusty strength of youth.  
God's benison is on thy head, the blessing of thy birth  
Shall follow thee till thou shalt see redemption come to earth!

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END OF BOOK II.



#### ADDITIONAL NOTES.

- Page 26.—“Episteton,” anything that can be scientifically demonstrated: that which is a subject of science.
- Page 34.—“Anatocismic,” *i. e.*, by compound interest.
- Page 54.—“Build up, etc.,” the “silent worker” being the *corallium rubrum*, the beautiful red coral of the Mediterranean.—“Effodial relics,” such as those of *elephas antiquus*, *elephas meridionalis*, and of still existing African types, have often been found in Sicily.
- Page 55.—“The Mantuan Master,”—Virgil.
- Page 61.—“Tetragrammaton,” the four letters of the Hebrew Yahve (Jehovah), the I Am, or Creator.

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#### ERRATUM:

On page 27, stanza xlv., line 6.  
For “Though” read “Through.”

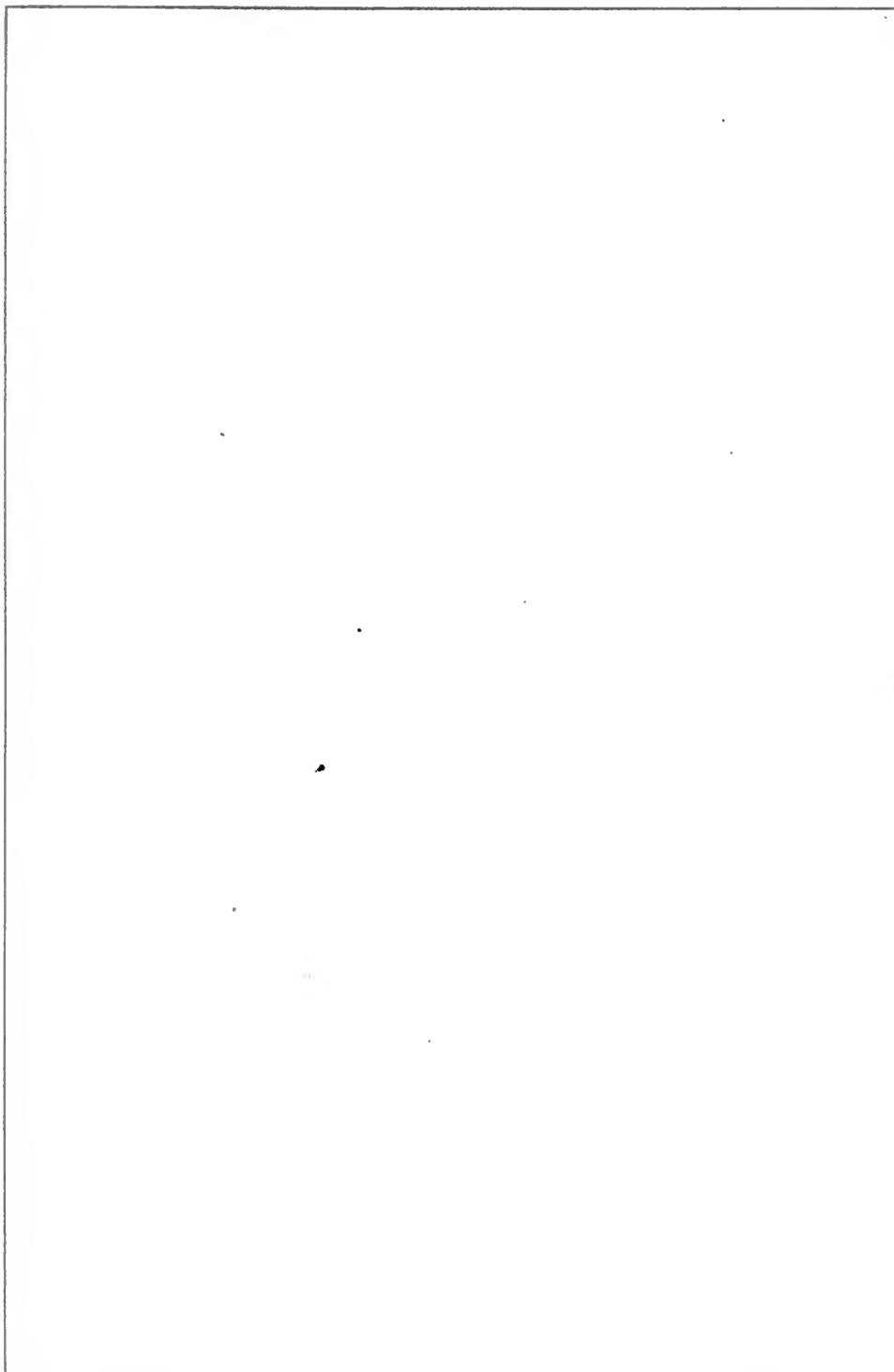
# THOMAS CHATTERTON.

## AN INQUIRY.

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Ergo alte vestiga oculis, et rite, repertum,  
Carpe manu: namque ipse volens facilisque sequetur,  
Si te fata vocant.

(*Aeneid, VI, 145-147.*)



# THOMAS CHATTERTON.

## AN INQUIRY.

[Thomas Chatterton (1752-1770), the boy-poet,—the most precocious and the greatest genius of the eighteenth century,—committed suicide in an obscure lodging in London on the 24th of August, 1770. “The best of his works, both in prose and verse, require no allowance to be made for the immature years of their author, when comparing him with the ablest of his contemporaries. Yet he was writing spirited satires at ten, and he produced some of the finest of his antique verse before he was sixteen years of age.” (Professor Daniel Wilson, in *Ency. Brit.*) His story is the most pathetic and saddening in the mournful annals of literature.]

---

Ξεῖνε, ὃ τι δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀμύχανον ἀποτρέψαι ἀνθρώπῳ . . . . ἐχθίστη  
δὲ ὁδίην ἵστι τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποισι αἰτή, πολλὰ φρονέοντα, μηδενὸς κρατέειν.\*

(Herodotus, *Cylliope*, XVI.)

### I.

“Thou hast put out his glory:” lo! the psalm  
Through Canyng’s aisles went rolling like the cry  
Of souls o’erburdened with life’s mysteries  
That winter eve; and I, a pilgrim, bowed  
My head in acquiescence. Then again  
High o’er the organ’s grounded swell I heard  
That plaint continued while it told of one  
Whose days of youth were shortened, and whose life  
Was wrecked like some fair pinnace ere the cliffs  
Of lonely Lundy bid the voyager  
Take one last look at England. Then for me  
The gates of Memory were unbarred, the while  
The white-robed preacher spoke his platitudes  
Of God and mercy, and of life the gift  
Bestowed that each might in his special sphere  
Attest the Giver’s goodness and augment  
The Hallelujah Chorus of the world.

Perchance the theme was threadbare, stale, or trite,

---

\*“O Friend! that which is ordained of God it is impossible for man to avert...  
....and the most grievous of sorrows to men is to have knowledge of many things  
yet be able to overcome none.” (Speech of the Persian soldier to Thersander at  
the banquet before the battle of Plataea.)

As themes are wont to be howe'er men strive  
To weave anew anachronistic threads;  
Perchance my soul was in its rebel mood,  
Disposed to cavil and to criticise,  
Disposed perchance to question the decree  
That, ere another moon should wax and wane,  
Would urge me exiled from my native land.  
For I was born rebellious and the hot,  
Fierce blood of untamed sires filled my veins;  
Of those who in the stirring times of old  
Had held the Norman robber to his watch  
And coward mailcoat nightly in the Pale;  
Of those who led Kilmainham's shaven monks  
Full many a merry dance what time they swept  
The prior's cellars and the prior's board,  
And seasoned foreign dainties with the rude  
And keen Milesian jest; of those who wrought  
Unpitying havoc on that awful day  
In Cullen's Wood, ere yet the Easter hymn  
Had lost its echo, while the Bristol men,  
Their wives and children, kept their holiday,  
And piped and feasted in the fragrant glades,  
Regardless of the cruel ring that drew—  
Black Monday's\* doomsters—nearer and more near.

Thus, while the parson's prosy platitudes  
Fell like the drowsy hum of swarming bees  
Upon my ears at evensong, my mind  
Disdained the beaten turnpike where the wheels  
Of that well-greased Erastian coach rolled on  
In optimistic comfort, and I dared,  
Before St. Mary Redcliffe's altar stone,  
To ask Omnipotence its Reason Why!

\*Black Monday—March 30, 1209, when 500 men (beside women and children) of an English colony from Bristol were killed at Cullen's Wood, County Wicklow, by the united septs of the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles, a deed unexpiated through six centuries of misfortune to the innocent inheritors of the wrongdoers' blood.

## II.

The cosmos is a mirror wherein God  
Perceives Himself, and though the human mind  
Shrinks back exhausted—like some fledgling lark  
First venturing to pierce the upper air—  
When asked to contemplate a universe  
Alike without an origin or end,  
Yet none the less this Proteus-thing whose course  
Is God's Procession, known alone to Him,  
Hath been from Everlasting and shall be  
The endless medium of His consciousness.  
And every soul of man is drawn from out  
The Universal Self, that so the One  
Great Soul, concentrated in each limited  
And finite member of an infinite  
Progression, may exhaust experience,  
Transmuting matter everywhere to mind  
By subtlest alchemy where Function fills  
And heats the furnace and assimilates  
Object with subject and gives birth to Thought.  
Age follows age, and type succeeds to type,  
But what has been shall never more resume  
Its erstwhile form without variety  
Or shade of difference; just as in some great  
Baronial hall the curious seeker finds  
The lineaments of some old cavalier  
Who fought at Naseby or on Marston Moor,  
Or wore his ruffles in our Virgin's court,  
And gazing on some later picture marks  
At once the likeness and discrepancy.  
For Nature's end is progress, and she brings  
Some innovation with her every turn,  
Obedient to His will for whom she stands  
The ready proplasm to fix His thought.  
Shall God repent Him of the thing He made  
When time and conflict prove it all unfit

To bear the standard or to stand in line?  
Or, as he\* deemed whose lofty strain was used  
To justify the order of the world,  
Is all the evil that we see and feel—  
The tooth carnivorous that rends and tears  
The tender doe's warm flesh; the cruel beak  
That stains the blossom where the mavis sung  
With blood drops gushing from the songster's throat;  
The whirling cloud that turns the western plain,  
But now the scene of industry and peace,  
Into a charnel chamber; or the dull  
And muffled throb that calls the miner's wife  
In wide-eyed agony to where the reek  
Of the black pit-mouth marks the miner's grave;  
Or in the lazaret house what time the knife  
And blade serrated lop his limbs away  
Who drugged in mercy knows nor loss nor pain;  
Or where the mother lays the flaxen head  
Of the stilled prattler to her torpid breast  
And in that moment dies a million deaths;  
Or where the Poet, holding death aloof  
By one strong purpose, sings his little song,  
Perchance to reach no other ear than his,  
Perchance to sound a requiem o'er his bier;—  
Is all this world-pain "universal good,"  
Unknown as pain to that Intelligence  
To whom all Nature is an open book  
Wherein His memoranda are inscribed?  
Doth God not know it when the sparrow falls?  
Doth He not hear him when the poor man cries?  
Or when in some lone chamber Sleep descends  
Through subtile vapours of mandragora  
On one who, waking, found the world a hell  
Of frustrate hope; or when, with hands outspread,  
The victim of man's passions and the wild

\*Alexander Pope in the "Essay on Man."

Defier of his social lies leaps forth  
To where the kindly current whispers peace  
And promised cleansing, think ye that the Eye  
Beholding these hath no more sympathy  
Than comes to one who with regardless foot  
Hath crushed some freighted ant that crossed his path?

## III.

Such questioning is all too high for me,  
And feeling is a sorry base whereon  
To rear an altar to the Unknown God.  
And I am sick to loathing of the cant  
Men call Philosophy, the endless war  
Of simple thoughts made formidable by  
The quack's device of poorly-mortised words  
Of Hellenizing tyros in whose track  
The dictionary maker groans and gleans  
And daily adds a page to England's tongue.  
Like to some tired truant whose best years,  
Were spent in bootless wandering, who brings  
Himself at last to visit the old home  
In hope of rest for his declining years,  
And who discovers that the petty burg  
Hath lost the witchery that memory kept  
Moss-shrouded in his time of pilgrimage;  
E'en so I turn me to the simple creed  
That in my callow youth I stood to speak,  
Boxed snugly up in the old transept's pew,  
What time the surpliced vicar bent his head  
In solemn fealty to the eastern wall.  
I turn thereto as hoping that the charm  
Of whilome faith can be restored to me,  
That haply I, like Naaman of old,  
Retaining knowledge and experience,  
May cast the sceptic leprosy and find  
My childlike innocence and faith renewed.  
Vain hope! as idle as the wish to turn

Back to its source the current that has passed  
The moss-grown mill and bid it fill again  
The slimy buckets of the ancient wheel.

Another vicar, razored till his face  
Shines like a shoat at Yuletide when the cook  
Inserts a lemon in the bloodless mouth,  
Now genuflects and postures in the old  
Gray church whose walls have caught the ocean's spray  
And worn it like a crust through centuries.  
And bit by bit the pomp that priesthood loves  
Is being grafted on the ordinal;  
And some there are whose apprehensive heads  
Are filled with bugbears and whose sermon-naps  
Are fitful wanderings in a world of dreams  
Where phantom parsons, chasuble encased,  
Play hocus-pocus with a bit of bread.  
The plain old creed that sounded sharp and clear,  
At once a challenge and a battlecry,  
When we his flock, followed the pastor's lead  
And "I believe" came promptly from our lips,  
Now drags its weary length in monotone  
Like ballads chanted in the marketplace  
By Munster beggars when the pigs are sold  
And beery drovers, clad in shaggy frieze,  
Give audience to some tale of Finn Mac Cool.  
The quick thought, straining at each long-drawn clause,  
Now breaks the tether and goes bounding off  
O'er wide savannas, cropping here and there  
Where eastern gales have borne prolific seeds  
From German nurseries and specious crops  
Of newer theories attract the eye.  
Thus while the symbol is being slowly spun  
Through half a hundred noses all the doubts  
Of all the doubters of a doubting age  
Obtrude unwelcome spectres, and the soul  
That hoped to worship flounders in the black

Serbonian bog where every footstep takes  
The stogged one farther from the stable shore.

Where Reason stands and promulgates its No  
Shall Faith step in and interpose its Yes?  
It cannot be; 'twere blasphemy to deem  
That He who gave the light and feeds the flame  
With oil of gathered knowledge can be pleased  
When the light bearer takes his little lamp  
And hides it 'neath a bushel, lest its beams  
Should dim the lustre of the feeble gleam  
That burns before the altar and dispel  
The sacred shadows where the oracles  
Are heard in adumbration like a faint  
Survival of the clouds of Sinai.

The light that lighteth every child of man  
Is special to himself and relative:  
Envisaged through and by its tiny gleam  
He makes his little world, and that to him  
Is sacred Truth whose seeming to the eye  
Accords with all his senses: clown or sage,  
That man is trembling on the dizzy brink  
Of madness who invests the things of sense  
With halos and chromatic aureoles,  
And peoples all the circumambient air  
And space and æther with his fantasies,  
As true to nature as the languid saints  
Whose doll-like faces, crowned with holy hoops,  
Attest the judgment of the Byzantines.  
Where knowledge is denied us God exacts  
No tribute of assent to mysteries.  
Unable to descry the links of fate  
That bind us to Necessity, we feel  
A sense of freedom; let us be content  
With this our independence lest we find  
By questioning too closely that the law  
Which bids us march to greater heights, yet leaves

Us free to venture from the beaten track  
Of older pilgrims, is itself constraint.  
For weal or woe we stand unto ourselves  
As free to guide the current of our lives  
By Reason and by Conscience, albeit  
The guides themselves are vassals. Shall we blame  
The dog for fawning or essay to wean  
The brute from turning round and round again  
Before he seeks in Dreamland to revive  
The joy of hunting? such necessity  
Hangs o'er us from the cradle to the grave:  
The will we boast is fashioned for us and  
The drift and tenor of our little lives  
Is part of one great purpose, though the book  
Wherein 'tis written stands for ever sealed  
To all but God, its Author and its End.

## IV.

I found a lark but yestereve,  
Down by the hedgerow, where the mowers leave  
Unscathed by scythe one little corner where  
The gate swings inward and the foxgloves share  
The nook thus sheltered: there with heaving breast  
It stood beside its nest,  
Stunned by the hand that did that nest bereave.

Full tenderly I smoothed its wings  
And bore it to my cottage, where it sings  
The livelong day, and while its little throat  
Pours out its liquid melody no note  
Of grief for ravished freedom strikes my ear,  
No matin song more clear  
When with the sunrise all the welkin rings.

## V.

O God! if that Thou art a sentient thing  
And not mere feeling, why was such a mind

Permitted thus to be encaged, to beat  
The cruel bars that hedged it, and at last,  
Sublimely challenging the janitor  
Who stands beside the portal to unlock  
The ebon gate, to pass a conqueror  
Or into life or silence—who shall say?  
O England! on that early summer morn  
The brown-armed reaper, stolid as the steer  
That grazed the neighbouring pasture, stayed the hand  
That drew the rasping whetstone o'er the blade,  
And felt a thrill of joyance when the lark  
Rose like a feathered carol overhead!  
Yet who of all to whom that morning's sun  
Came bright with promise in the golden fields  
From Kent to Carlisle, Sennen to the Wash,  
Might trace that nobler songster who had forced  
His prison barriers and with ready wing  
Outstripped the eagle in his haste to gain  
The purer æther where no earthly taint  
Or terrene element could clog his soul?  
O England! where the prophet eats his bread  
With salt of his own weeping, what had he,  
The Boy of Bristol, common to the herd  
Spoon-fingered of the greedy clowns that throng  
The streets of Babylon, where burgher souls  
Feel but one impulse? or of those in whom  
The fire of genius heats the crucible  
Where like an alchemist the student blends  
Wit, wisdom, folly in his lust for gold?  
Or those who, perched beneath the sounding-board,  
Hebdomadally teach us to beware  
Lest anchorless we drift adown the flood  
To cataracts of anarchy and lust;  
Who chill the lifeblood of our enterprise  
And drive us skulking to the mildewed shades  
Of Superstition, lest the noonday sun

Darting delirium strike our fevered heads?

O Chatterton! if aught of thee survive  
The swift obstetrics of that summer night,  
Hear this my protest when I raise my voice  
Disclaiming fealty to the trader's god!  
Hear this my malison on that fell creed  
Of contrary environment\* which makes  
Deformity the order of the world  
And sanctifies the hemlock when man lifts  
A righteous hand against the house of life!

Brave heart and gallant spirit that could thus  
Defy the Furies, snatching victory  
When pitiless Megæra bade the world  
Of cant and custom pile another cairn  
On Genius conquered, excellence subdued,  
To stand a suppliant in the servants' hall  
And eat the bread of patronage or grind  
A stinted measure for the Philistines  
Who mock the blinded giant as he toils,  
The hack of letters, for his daily crust.  
Brave heart and gallant spirit! at the last  
Thou madest Death thy minister and he,  
Whom cowards dread and shun, became thy slave  
To answer to thy summons and to tug  
The labouring oar to ferry thee across  
To that dim shore where thou might'st haply find  
An answer to the query of thy life,  
And stand before the Presence, there to learn  
The secret spring of that great mystery,  
Thine incarnation and thy placement in  
A world inimical; to learn perchance  
The reason of the union of a soul  
Creative, proud, and absolute with clay  
Of stolid Wessex where the yokels stand

\*“*Antiperistasis* is a philosophical term, signifying a repulsion on every part.”  
(Note to Bacon's “Table of the Colours of Good and Evil.”)

With mouths agape or munching lazy straws  
The while they incubate their leaden thoughts.

Brave heart and gallant spirit! who of those  
Who daily drink the acid and the gall  
Of cross-bound Genius while the venal scribes  
Who sit in Moses' seat wag pitying heads  
Hath caught no echo from that farther shore  
Inviting him to venture? Such have I  
Heard in the gloaming when that Hesper, poised  
Amid the changing bronzes of the west,  
Shone like a beacon set at heaven's gate:  
And sweeter than Æolian music seems  
The murmur of the wavelets as they break  
On that broad strand whereto who wills may pass  
Unchallenged, unimpeded. Bide thy time,  
O ready mariner! and stand prepared  
To slip thy cable when the storm of life  
Blows fiercest and the rocks that fringe thy lee  
Gnash deadly hatred, and the fate-spume flies  
Like vipers' venom, and the wreckers wait  
To see thee in the breakers while they mock  
Thee struggling where the white-capped surges dash  
The waifs of time upon a hostile shore.

O welcome revolution that hath brought  
Freedom to all who dare to lift their chains  
And strip the rusty iron scale by scale!  
And happy ye, the Christs on whom the oil  
Of God's anointing truth hath been outpoured  
To make ye kings, the fearless chiefs\* who claim  
The lordship over Self, that little realm  
Where each may be a Caesar who can dare  
To challenge old Prescription and to set  
At naught the greybeard Prejudice that kneels  
Before the roodscreen mumbling o'er his beads!

\*Compare Seneca, *Thyestes*, Act II.—

“*Rex est qui metuit nihil;*  
*Hoc regnum sibi quisque dat.*”

---

For weal or woe ye are the lords of life,  
Imperial umpires vested with the right  
Of ultimate decision: when the soul  
Hath struggled through Gethsemane, and when  
The grinning skulls of Golgotha shine out  
In phosphorescent mockery, and when  
The smirking Pharisees prepare to gloat  
O'er hopeless Misery fastened to the cross,—  
Then, when the skies are brazen and the air,  
Surcharged with hell-fires, quivers with the glow,  
And God himself withdraws within the veil  
Where human plaint is heard not, then, brave souls!  
'Tis yours, like Chatterton, to turn defeat  
To victory most certain and to make  
The Grand Inquisitor himself your slave!  
Have courage, brothers! where the boy hath trod  
The man may boldly follow, and perchance  
Across the flood are verdant meads where songs  
The sottish world refused to hear are sung  
To chords that in themselves are anodynes  
For all earth's pain and sorrow and neglect!  
Bright fields of living asphodel where foot  
Of churl or slave or caitiff never trod!  
Be this our bourn, and those our comrades there  
Who bore unflinchingly the stroke of fate,—  
Or patriots or martyrs,—who in death  
Like Saxon Harold won a nobler crown  
And wider empire than the world could give!  
O royal Death! O kindly Death! thy touch  
Is benediction and thy kiss is sweet.

## MISCELLANEA.

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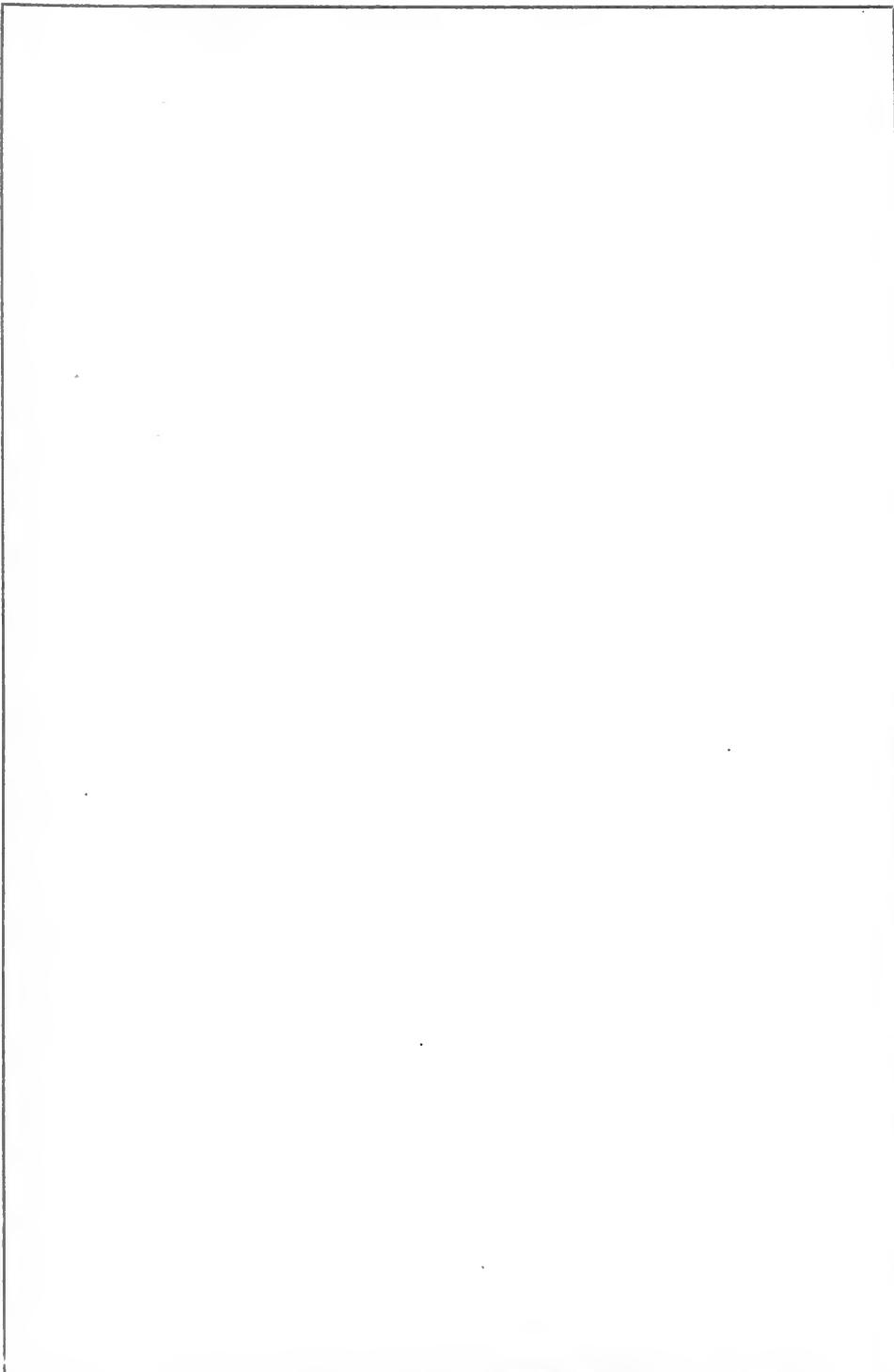
O, testudinis aureae

Duleem quae strepitum, Pieri, temperas:

\* \* \* \* \*

Quod spiro et placeo (si placeo) tuum est.

(*Horat., Carm. IV, Ode iii.*)



## MISCELLANEA.

### A CLOUD CAROL.

The Ice King wondering looked below  
Where the poet's home was seen,  
At the rhododendrons' verdant glow,  
The wax-leaved kalmias, row on row,  
And the mystic holly's green.

"My malison on the walls," he cried,  
"The rocky walls that fend  
These sylvan dingles from my wide  
Dominion and compel my pride  
And sovereignty to bend!"

He raised his hand and the hills grew pale  
At the fury of his wrath;  
Vapor and cloudburst and scathing hail,  
Borne on the wings of the arctic gale,  
The heralds to clear his path.

And the monarch shook from his diadem  
And scatter'd his treasures round  
O'er branch and frond, o'er leaf and stem,—  
Where'er he looked a twinkling gem  
That morn Hyperion found.

And lo! the Delian gave each bright  
Translucent spark a tongue:  
Symbols of purity and light  
Divine, they met the poet's sight,  
And this the song they sung.

### THE CIRRUS.

Over coral islets in summer seas  
We float like a fleecy veil;  
In idlesse we toy with the languid breeze,

Or flirt with the joyous gale.  
And all day long  
We hear the song  
Of the mighty sea, and we love to trace  
Our changeful forms in his honest face.  
Pure, unsullied, and chaste are we,  
Cloud-vestals in robes of snow;  
Feathery, filose, and forward and free,  
High over the ebb and flow  
Of the human tide  
Of sin and pride,  
Untarnished by evil, untouched by care,  
We wander at will through the ambient air.

#### THE STRATUS.

Silently, steadily, rank on rank,  
We gather our wide array,  
With tenuous squadrons on the flank  
Drawn out where the zephyrs play.  
Silently, steadily, tier on tier,  
As the Titans built so build we;  
And the mariner's cheek is blanched with fear  
When the shadow comes o'er the sea.  
For the whilome azure tint forsakes  
The liquid dells between  
The rippling crests where Triton shakes  
His locks of em'rald green.  
And the leashed dogs growl in the thunder caves,  
For their time of release is nigh,  
When the red bolt shoots o'er the wakening waves,  
And the lightning rends the sky.  
Silently, sullenly: lo! the gale  
Is quickened and ripe for birth:—  
Whirlwind and deluge and blinding hail,  
And the hurricane's frenzied mirth.

## THE CUMULUS,—TORNADO.

Panting and throbbing, lo! where the city  
Heaves like a giant oppressed!  
Lo! where the mother's eye looks down in pity  
On the wan babe at her breast!  
Sluggishly flows the dark river;  
Only the aspen leaves quiver;  
Glaringly, flaringly gloweth the sun.—  
Oh, that his race were run!  
Oh, that the day were done!

That the jaded toilers and moilers might flee to their welcome beds,  
To pray for the evening zephyr to fan their fevered heads.

Mark ye its pulsing breast,  
Low in the far south-west,  
Where the sky and prairie meet,—  
Mark ye the spume clouds fleet!  
'Tis but a summer shower,  
Born but to die in an hour.  
Rejoice, O panting city!  
The kindly heaven in pity  
Hath sent relief:  
Pray that the storm be brief.

Green and purple and gold,  
Gold and purple and green;  
Piling up fold on fold,  
And ever the glare between!  
Mark how the vapors throng,  
List to the storm cloud's song!

Like the small cloud that, rising from the sea,  
Spread over Carmel's head its ebon pall  
While Ahab rode to Jezreel, so do we  
Spread darkling to the zenith: lurid all,  
Tumid and convolute,  
Pregnant with thunder:  
Lo! bird and beast are mute,  
Palsied with wonder!

Ho! for the merry dance!  
Gaily we leap and prance,  
Twisting and turning!  
Hark! from the teeming womb  
Rumbles the thunder boom  
Wild lightnings burning!  
Now! now! now!  
Stretch forth the finger—  
Why should we linger?  
Now! now! now!  
Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!  
Hurrah! for the whirlwind's breath!  
For the carnival of death!  
Hurrah!  
Cottage and stable,  
Turret and gable,  
Are food for the funnel cloud;  
Brutal and human,  
Maiden and woman,  
It gathers them, humble or proud.  
Hurrah for the force we wield!  
Hurrah for the ravaged field!  
Borne on the wild wind's wings  
Lo! man and the puny things  
He calleth his are sped,—  
Hurrah for the stricken dead!  
They are done with care and sorrow,  
With the burden of to-morrow,  
With the loves and hates of years,  
And their meed of smiles and tears;—  
Hurrah for the peaceful dead!

The city lies prostrate, the fury hath passed,  
The mourners are silent, the pale moon hath cast  
Her silver effulgence in flood o'er the path  
Where the Storm King went by in the might of his wrath.

---

The river, transfused with new life rushes by,  
The fireflies kindle their lamps as they fly;  
The night breeze floats in where the terror once whirled,  
And whispers that death is the life of the world.

---

### WHY?

---

A mother lay dead,  
Dead in her prime,  
And the death-watch—friends and neighbours—  
Sat around;—  
As, in God's time,  
When we, my brothers, shall have ceased our labors,  
Those whom we know shall watch when that profound  
Sleep that we so much dread  
Shall chill our blood and turn our flesh to clay,  
And dreamless night perchance shall close our day.  
A mother lay dead!  
One little, feeble wail,—  
“Mamma!” one wailing cry:  
And the guardian angel's cheek turns pale  
As the accents pierce the sky.  
It was her nestling-bird,  
The youngest of the brood:—  
O God! can it be that the cry is heard?  
O God! hath the breast of the mother stirred  
When the nursling cried for food?  
Go to, vain man! canst thou explain  
The mystery of love and pain?

---

**BALLAD OF MINER JIM.\***

---

1.

Write me a name and a simple line  
 To tell of a noble deed;  
 Write me the tale of the Rossland mine;  
 Write large that the world may read.

2.

Jim Hemsworth—only a common name,  
 Plain Anglo-Saxon Jim:  
 You will find it hard on the roll of fame  
 To find a place for him.

3.

Smith, Conson, Hemsworth, comrades three,  
 With Jim at the windlass crank:  
 In that narrow shaft you might hardly see  
 The daylight above at bank.

4.

They filled the bucket with gleaming ore,—  
 “Stand clear!” as it rose o'erhead;  
 And the sturdy miners bent once more  
 To the mattocks that gave them bread.

5.

Oh 'tis hard on the back and 'tis hard on the knee,  
 For the shaft is deep I ween;  
 And a miner's winch in the north countree  
 Is a clumsy, slow machine.

6.

You may strike it rich—if you're born to luck;  
 You may toil from day to day  
 Hoping on, till you find that you've only struck  
 A chute that can never pay.

---

\*The story of “a rare act of heroism, such as deserves to be recorded in history and song, which was performed at Rossland, British Columbia,” was first published (early in 1897) by the *San Francisco Examiner*, and subsequently (April 28, 1897) by the *Chicago Daily News*. At the time of writing it was not known if the hero's life could be preserved by amputating his arms at the shoulders.

## 7.

Two hundred dollars a month, or more,—  
    You must work though you break your back;  
The Chinee cook and the bill at the store,  
    And the rent of the little shack.

## 8.

With a grip of steel in his hardened hands  
    He heaves through the livelong day;  
You can trace his shoulders' knotted bands  
    And the rope-like sinews play.

## 9.

Creaking and groaning, see it come  
    To the blessed upper air;  
The cable coils round the polished drum,  
    And the glistening freight is here.

## 10.

One effort more and the load will be  
    Swung clear of the pit,—O God!  
See the broken crank fall aimlessly  
    With the winchman to the sod!

## 11.

And the bucket speeds like a bolt of death  
    From the light to the shaft's black gloom,  
Where the awestruck diggers hold their breath  
    At that rushing, certain doom.

## 12.

Thine hour is come: lo! Miner Jim,  
    To this thing wast thou born,  
As Calvary's cross came unto Him  
    By whom the thorns were worn.

## 13.

Full on the whirling wheels he sprung,  
    He thrust his arms between  
Their cruel teeth, the torn flesh hung  
    In shreds incarnadine.

## 14.

Never a cry Jim Hemsworth gave  
In his awful agony,  
While the warm blood ran like a crimson wave  
From the wheels and the axle tree.

## 15.

Oh their hearts grew chill when the terror dropped  
On the men in that narrow mine;  
But the hero smiled when the bucket stopped  
And his look was all divine.

## 16.

Then they blocked the wheel and with tender care  
Drew him forth from that cruel rim;  
And strong men wept when they stooped to bear  
The litter of Martyr Jim.

## 17.

“Never mind,” he cried with a cheerful voice,  
As the foreman bowed his head,  
“Never mind, so long as I saved the boys;  
Thank God! they are safe,” he said.

## 18.

Oh greater love hath no man than this,  
That he die to save his friend;  
And in Love Divine he shall find the bliss  
That can never, never end.

## 19.

And this is the tale of the Rossland mine,  
The tale that all men should read,  
And this is the name and the simple line  
To tell of a noble deed.

## 20.

“Jim Hemsworth, the Miner, saved his mates;”  
Be it written clear and plain;  
And the world will know that the good God rates  
Jim’s loss Jim’s highest gain.

---

TO THE REPUBLIC.

---

Thou, with thy kingmen, every man a host  
Buckler'd by Liberty, why dost thou sleep,  
While eastern breezes bear across the deep  
From snow-crowned Ida and the Cuban coast  
The dirge of Freedom? where is now the boast  
Of thy great charter? Lo! the angels weep  
To see thee somneous when thy sword should leap  
Like vengeful lightning from its sheath: thou know'st  
Thy frown can daunt the tyrant; wilt thou then,  
Oblivious of thy mission, let the stars  
That grace thy standard droop in languor when  
Blood, lust, and rapine glut their greed in wars?  
Oh that my call might move thee, might inspire  
Thy sons once more to light the fathers' fire!

---

## TWO AVATARS:

BUDDHA—CHRIST.

Earthward, across the gulf that spreads between  
Time and Eternity there came a Soul,—  
A life-germ from the heart of the great Whole,  
And wondering shepherds, seeing its light serene,  
Their flocks forsaking, guided by its sheen,  
Came, gift-beladen, to that lowly goal  
In the rude stable, where the timid foal  
And wide-eyed oxen saw the wondrous scene.

O Manger-Born! methinks Thy pensive eyes  
Of introspection even now compare  
This littered stable with the memories  
Of far Lumbini's pleasant garden, where  
Siddhartha came the fourfold way to find  
That the next avatar by Love refined.

---

### AD SAPIENTES.

Once, in my nonage, I rode forth to quell  
 Three giants grim and gory that had long  
 Oppressed the nations, filled the earth with wrong,  
 And made man's little life a constant hell  
 Wherin the three fell autocrats did dwell  
 Enthroned in mystery. Trusting in my strong  
 Right arm and mail of proof, I met the throng  
 Of hireling myrmidons and battled well.

Woe worth the day when, victory achieved,  
 I called the people forth to liberty!  
 Then stood they blinking in the sun, aggrieved,  
 Cursing the hand that dared to set them free.  
 And with sheathed glaive and uncouched lance I sought  
 A hermit's refuge in the Realm of Thought.

---

### THE NONDESCRIPTS.

Written after reading an estimate of the world's population, wherein the whole human family was classed according to religion,—as Buddhists, Christians, Mohammedans, etc.,—111,000,000 being set down as Nondescript Heathens.

Why stand ye thus unlabelled? Can it be  
 Ye are so worthless that Redemption passed  
 Ye by unheeded? or are ye the last  
 Reserve of the great army, doomed to see  
 Christian and Moslem, Buddhist, Brahman fling  
 The temple idols into one vast heap  
 Conglomerate, that haply they may keep  
 Each its own interest in the smelted thing?  
 Then while men marvel that their god should be  
 A senseless, dumb alloy, will ye reclaim  
 The creed primæval, and perchance proclaim  
 The primal truth that God has made man free?

## THE CRY OF GREECE.

(April, 1897.)

O Wingless Victory!\* come forth and stand  
 Where stood thy temple in the days of old!  
 Come forth to shame the caitiffs who withhold  
 Their help and comfort while the hellish band,  
 Mahound's blood drinkers, desolate the land!

Shame on thee, England! that thy lust of gold  
 Hath closed thine ears while God himself hath tolled  
 The knell of Turkish infamy! Thy hand  
 Could stay the mongrel crew and rescue Greece.

How art thou fallen from thy high estate,  
 That for thyself thou seek'st ignoble peace,  
 Taking thy cue from despots, whose vile hate  
 Of Hellas and her hopes portends for thee  
 An empire lost and lapsed supremacy!

## GAUTAMA BUDDHA.

Thou wast a living, breathing man, with heart  
 Attuned like mine to every human chord;  
 Feeling the needs that I feel, drawn toward  
 Wife, offspring, friends, and country; and thou art  
 Man's best exemplar in the allotted part  
 We all must play in life, where no reward  
 Is higher than the meed of being lord  
 Of that small realm where Passion's fiery dart  
 Makes living misery. Oh! would that I  
 Could follow in thy footsteps and attain  
 The heights serene to view the tranquil sky  
 Where not an echo of earth's cry of pain  
 Disturbs the aether, so might I combine  
 Thy spirit's freedom and thy love divine!

\*Nike Apteros, whose temple on the Acropolis commemorated the victory over the Persians near the river Eurymedon.

---

### THE SENTINEL.\*

---

He stands at the door, yet he enters not,  
That sentinel old and grim;  
Nor princeling nor satrap meeteth aught  
Of sign or salute from him,  
As they pass him by  
With averted eye;  
But their cheeks grow pale and the quick nerves thrill  
At thought of that Presence so cold and still.  
He hath stood long syne on the snowy plain  
Through many a weary day,  
And heard unmoved the slow refrain  
As the exiles went their way;  
And ever I ween  
That scythe so keen,  
When in pity swung for the exiles' groans,  
Hath left but the stubble of whitened bones.  
Full oft hath he passed by the fortress wall  
And hath heard the bitter cry;  
And unheeding sped beyond the call  
Of the wretch who fain would die.  
In the land-thrall's cot  
He may gather not,  
But the landlord's wealth and the landlord's state  
Turn to dust at his knock on the castle gate.  
He stands at the door of the mighty Czar  
And counteth the grains of sand;  
When the last shall fall nor bolt nor bar  
Shall make him stay his hand.  
Grim sentinel!  
Could'st thou but tell  
To the waiting millions o'er all the earth  
That this vigil of Death meant a people's birth!

---

\*Written during the last illness of Alexander III., Czar of Russia.

---

LOVE'S STAGES.

---

How doth he love who loves in youth?  
With fondest trust and vows of truth;  
Ere passion taints, his love is sooth—  
Abiding.

How loves the maid when fancy's wing  
Of new-born faculty doth spring  
To greet bright Eros as her king?  
—Confiding.

How loveth he to whom the years  
Of manhood's toil and manhood's tears  
Have given judgment, strength, and fears?  
—Right surely.

And she whose youthful years have fled,—  
How loves she when from out the dead  
Dust of past hopes a spark is bred?  
—Demurely.

For him who feebly strives to throw  
On autumn leaves Love's æstive glow  
How shines the taper burning low?  
—Obscurely.

Oh world-renewing, mighty Love!  
Like the branch brought by Noah's dove  
Thou bringest pledges from above  
To allure me.

What though Time's frost hath touched my brow,  
What though the furrows of his plough  
Are on my cheek? yet will I vow  
As lightly

As when in youth I swore to be  
The slave of Beauty—age shall see  
The silvery flame alive in me  
Burn brightly.

And when my barque floats on the wide  
Dark river, and I feel her glide  
To where Oblivion's silent tide  
Heaves never,—

Then let me bear across the sea  
To shores unknown one memory;  
That woman's love may comfort me  
For ever!

---

### TOO LATE.

---

Thou canst not call it back:  
Though done but yesterday  
It evermore shall stay  
A deed wrought by thy hand,  
Whose consequence shall stand  
For ever and for ever,  
Retrieve it shalt thou never:  
Thou canst not call it back.

Thou canst not call it back:  
Although in after years  
Thine eyes distil salt tears,  
When memory shall recall  
The story of that fall,—  
A trusting maid,  
A love betrayed:  
Thou canst not call it back.

Thou canst not call it back:  
Repentance cannot bring  
Exemption from the sting;  
Remorse shall weigh thee down  
In field or tower or town;  
The wide world o'er  
It goes before:  
Thou canst not call it back.

Thou canst not call it back:  
    Not though thy voice could reach  
        Where never human speech  
Or human sigh was heard,  
Whose calm was never stirred,  
    Where all is naught  
        But God's own thought:  
Thou canst not call it back.

Thou canst not call it back:  
    Standing beside her tomb,  
        Be this thine awful doom,  
To know 'twas done for aye—  
Sought, yielded, cast away!  
    One little heart  
        Giv'n, torn apart:  
Thou canst not call it back.

Thou canst not call it back:  
    Not though her spirit bore  
        Forgiveness from the shore  
Too early sought, when love  
Was outraged; far above  
    All form of will  
        The Past stands still:  
Thou canst not call it back.

Thou canst not call it back:  
    Not even when thy soul  
        Shall reach its final goal,  
And in the clear white light  
Of that All-Searching sight  
    Archangels read  
        Aloud that deed,  
Thou canst not call it back.

Thou canst not call it back:  
    Within the eternal gates  
        Silent her spirit waits

Thy coming;—how wilt thou,  
With falsehood on thy brow,  
In thy great need  
Find grace to plead?  
Thou canst not call it back.

*Miserere, miserere  
Mei, Domine!*

---

### RICHARD REALF.

(Died Oct. 28, 1878. Buried in Lone Mountain Cemetery, San Francisco.)

---

There, within hearing of the mighty sea,  
They made thy bed, O Gifted One! and raised  
Thy simple monument, where love erased  
All mention of the curse that fell on thee  
When thou, Apollo's envoy, bent thy knee  
Where loose-zoned nymphs and graces passion-crazed  
Attend Cythera's chariot.\* When, amazed,  
We saw thee break the lute whose melody  
Had charmed two hemispheres, and when thy soul,  
In terror flying from its Nemesis,  
Had rushed unbidden to that unknown goal  
Where she was waiting thee whose fiery kiss  
Made thee a man and exile, then we learned  
How bright the flame men called thy Genius burned.

---

\*Horat, Od., lib. I, Ode 30.

## AT GOLDSMITH'S GRAVE.\*

London, October 31, 1894.

## I.

All-Hallow-Eve and Goldsmith's humble grave!  
    Beyond me, like the distant roar  
    Of western surges on the shore  
Where the black Longships snarling meet the wave  
    I hear the din of Fleet Street, and within  
    The Templars' church the choristers begin  
The chant that on the morn shall fill the nave  
    And gray rotunda with a silver flood  
    Of melody and praise as when the blood  
Of the stern warrior-saints who gladly gave  
    Their all to Christ was stirred,  
    When the proud psalm was heard  
On eastern deserts where the paynim horde  
First learned to dread the Templar's hymn and sword.

## II.

My years have number'd his, and lo! I stand  
    By Goldsmith's grave at Hallow-E'en!  
    Patience, my spirit, while I glean  
Time's aftermath within my ready hand!  
    Enduring, humble, hopeful, this was he:  
    This, too, All-wise Disposer! teach thou me,  
Forgotten pilgrim to my native land!  
    Here, where the very pavement hath a voice,  
    I hear a whisper bidding me rejoice  
To bear the standard of the knightly band  
    Who, strengthened by defeat,  
    Unflinchingly can meet  
The barbed arrows of the Paynim throng  
Who scorn the minor poet and his song.

\*First published in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

**RICARDO ANTONIO PROCTOR.**  
**VIRO PRÆDITO VIRTUTE MNEMOSYNON.**

---

The murmuring rill in ocean finds its death,  
 So glides man's life toward the gloomy portal,  
 Alas! how speedily of every mortal  
 The memory fades, as fades the parting breath.\*

To nobly live the sage's life resigned,  
 For human good its calm career pursuing—  
 Or nobly die for man and man's well-doing,  
 Alike becomes and proves the generous mind.†

Inspired and cheered by all who knew its worth,—  
 The hope of fame with altruism blending—  
 Such Proctor's life, whose all-unlooked for ending  
 Awoke a chord of sorrow round the earth.

No fav'rer he of mysteries profound;  
 His keen eye searched the cosmos to discover  
 Its hidden meanings, while of truth a lover  
 He scorned to feign when angry bigots frowned.

In him reviv'd, we saw the generous fire  
 That glowed in Bruno's gallant bosom burning;  
 From Falsehood's compromise with horror turning,  
 As Bruno spurned the image from the pyre.‡

\* φεῦ, τοῦ θανόντος ὡς ταχειά τις βρωτοῖς.

χάρις διαρρέει—Sophocles, AJAX, 1266-7.

† ἀλλ᾽ ἡ καλῶς ζῆν, ἡ καλῶς τεθηκέναι.

τὸν εὐγενῆ χρῆ.—Ibid 479-80.

‡ In 1875, Mr. Proctor, upon being informed that certain of his scientific opinions and teachings were opposed to the doctrines of his church, unreservedly abjured and withdrew from that church. In 1878, when a well-known London minister alluded to the terrible loss of life resulting from the sinking of the *Princess Alice*, as an example of God's mercy to the survivors, Mr. Proctor and the writer of these lines entered forcible protests against such pulpit utterances. In one of his letters on this occasion, Mr. Proctor wrote thus: "No wonder clergymen complain that Atheism, or what they take to be Atheism, is spreading. Better a hundred-fold to believe in no God at all, than to believe in such a God as some of them picture to us." (From *The Open Court*, Sept. 27, 1888.)

Thrice noble Indagator! thou shalt live  
In minds whose *form* is partly thine,—preparing  
The way to “vaster issues,” still declaring  
The glory of the bounty God doth give!  
God—the Eternal Order—Being—All:  
Of whom we are, in whom we shall be ever;  
Changing through all, but deviating never,  
Though suns grow dark, mendie, or sparrows fall.

---

#### THE CARDIOGRAPH.\*

(Suggested by 1887 being the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Invention of the Electric Telegraph.)

---

Said Cupid to Venus:  
“Dear mother, between us  
I think we can hit on a notion,  
That will give us much pleasure, and serve in a measure  
To keep all mankind in commotion.  
“A creature called Morse,  
A Yankee, of course;  
The devil’s in all of that nation—  
Has struck an invention, of which I’ve heard mention,  
Which certainly beats all creation.  
“With wires and dials,  
And magnets and phials,  
Men chatter together at ease,  
From Boston to Cork, San Francisco, New York,  
Over deserts, through rivers, and seas.  
“Shame befall us if they,  
Mere creatures of clay,  
At us, the Immortals, should laugh!  
So let us be wise, and something devise,  
To rival the new telegraph.”

---

\*First published in Chicago *Morning News*, June 8, 1887.

Thus spoke the boy Cupid,  
Whom some gods thought stupid:  
And, lo! in a moment he found  
An energy latent, Jove granted a patent,  
With powers to test it around.  
  
With his bow in his hand,  
The blind boy took his stand,  
Not far from two children of earth:  
He touched both their hearts with the point of his darts,  
And flew back to heaven in mirth.  
  
And since then, each heart,  
However apart  
In distance—holds commune most sweet;  
For, though oceans should run between them, each one  
Feels the other responsively beat.

---

MY MOTHER.  
April 26, 1865.

---

Thou, I, and God's own priest,  
And that clear April morn;  
The dedicated feast—  
And lo! thou wast reborn!  
  
Then stood I there alone,  
Alone henceforth to be;  
A helmeless vessel thrown  
A waif on life's black sea.  
  
Oh! piteous hands that reach  
Beyond the veil in vain!  
Oh! grief too deep for speech!  
Oh! heritage of pain!

---

FINIS.

## Publisher's Notice.

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The author of "Song of the Ages" earnestly requests that a copy of every review or notice may be mailed to him. This favor is especially solicited from journals published outside the United States.







Author O'Byrne, Michael Cymon ..... LT. 216933. 0.147S

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